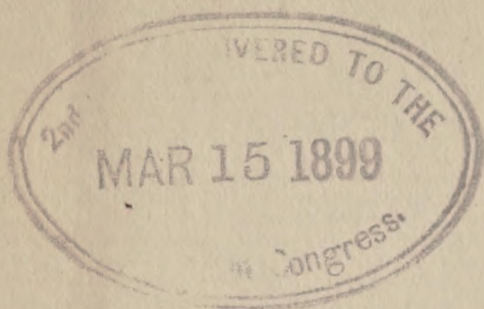


VICOMTE
DE PUYJOLI



JULES CLARETIE

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VICOMTE DE PUYJOLI

VICOMTE DE PUYJOLI

A Romance of the French Revolution

BY

JULES CLARETIE

ENGLISHED BY EMMA M. PHELPS.



R. F. FENNO & COMPANY, 9 AND 11 EAST
SIXTEENTH STREET : NEW YORK CITY

1899

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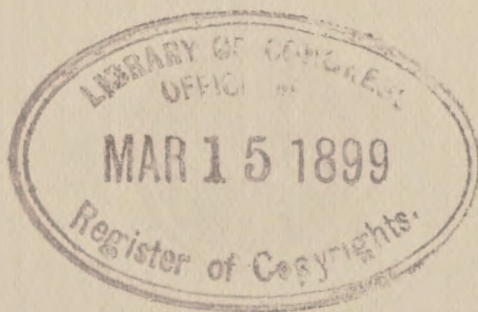
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Vicomte de Puyjoli.

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PREFACE.

TO VICTORIEN SARDOU.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It is twenty years ago, perhaps even more—how time flies!—since we, you and I, were walking one day from Saint-Germain to Marly le Roi, and as we walked we talked, do you remember? And the subject of our conversation was a person long dead and forgotten—a person who had played a not ignoble part in the bloody drama of the Revolution. He was only a poor player; nobody noticed him, yet (you said and truly) his should have been the applause, the glory given to others. When I say *we* talked, it was you who talked—ah, how eloquently!—as we walked; and the audiences which have with so much justice and discrimination applauded your work upon the stage, how much more would they have applauded had they been privileged to listen to you that day!

It was a pleasant road bordered by fragrant hedges. The time of year was summer, and we were both young then.

But why do I write ‘then,’ you at least are young yet, and will never grow old, I think.

And I flatter myself that if you and I were upon that same road to-day, we should step out as sturdily,

our mirth and laughter would be as cheerful as it was then, twenty years ago. I seem, as I write this, to hear your voice as you talk of La Bussière.

Of Charles de la Bussière, poor player of the Revolution, whose courage, whose devotion to his fellow artists in the dark days of the Thermidor made of him a hero. And you told in confidence that you had serious thoughts of making him the hero of your next drama.

Just then, however, a sudden shower obscured the sky. The rain fell in torrents, we had to run laughing to take refuge in a half-finished house at the foot of Monte Cristo.

While the rain streamed down you went on with your narration.

How eloquent your theme made you! My attention never flagged, though the story was hardly done when we tramped into Marly. And the wonder of it all is that the tale was true, every word of it.

This poor, impecunious devil of a strolling player did really at the risk of his own life save scores and scores of his more gifted colleagues from the guillotine.

The Comédie Française should ever after have burnt a votive candle to his memory.

I imagine, however, that the poor player really thought the distinguished company would,—as a reward,—open its ranks to him.

Here, however, he made a mistake; such a reward was not for him. The mountebank was never allowed to pose with the artists.

After the dark days of the Terror had passed, the *Journal des Débats* printed an article eulogizing in its columns the service done by La Bussière for the

Comédie :—a benefit also was given him by the players whose lives he had saved.

Hamlet was given on that occasion, followed by the Two Pages. It was the night of the 15th Germinal, year 9, April fifteenth, 1801.

The First Consul condescended to occupy a box on that night, which, however, was only to be expected, perhaps, his consort, Josephine, having been one of those saved from death by La Bussière's intervention.—Not content with protecting the mimic queens of the stage from death, La Bussière (think of it!) had managed to save the head of a future Empress of France from tumbling on the block. It was upon our excursion to Marly that, as I said before, you confided to me your intention of making of this man (who died poor and in a madhouse,—perhaps he had been a little mad all his life) the hero of a play you had then in your mind. He should, (you declared, and you have kept your word) have his triumph upon the stage of the Académie. It is there La Bussière lives and breathes again to future generations.

Thanks to you, he is rescued from forgetfulness and thankless oblivion. The poor player is known as the Hero that he was indeed. And I too, now many years later, lay a tiny leaf of laurel upon the tomb of La Bussière.

In this book of mine I have not done him the justice he deserves. How it happened I do not know, but in Puyjoli he refused to take any other rôle than the simple, humble one he acted when alive. It was you, the magician, who called him from the shades to my view.

As I wrote the book, it seemed to me as though you

were again by my side, that we were youths and walking together along the pleasant road toward Marly.

Time passes, friendship endures. To-day in the rush and jostle of town life, in the midst of severe and engrossing labours, our companionship is as pleasant as it was in the idle, careless summer days.

Therefore it seems only meet and right to me that at the head of this book I inscribe your loved and honoured name. And permit me, I who so often with admiring crowds have applauded your written words upon the stage, to thank you for those spoken to me in private; words which have inspired this tale.

Words which I alone was privileged to hear and silently to applaud.

Your devoted friend,

JULES CLARETIE.

VICOMTE DE PUYJOLI.

CHAPTER I.

“TOO BEAUTIFUL PUYJOLI.”

THIS history opens a year or two before the breaking out of the French Revolution of 1789.

Versailles at that time was regarded by the nobility as the Promised Land was probably regarded by the Israelites of old, and for a courtier to be invited by his master to take a seat with him in the royal coach, was looked upon as the summit of earthly felicity.

It was a time when all the clocks and watches throughout the kingdom were regulated by the tardy sundial in the garden at Trianon: a time when the nobles looked down upon the common people as the gods of old from secure Olympian heights gazed down upon their worshippers below.

Perigueux in Perigord had then (like all other petty provincial towns) its court modelled after the greater one at Versailles. The nobles of Perigord, moreover, frivolous and short-sighted as their brothers of Paris, took no notice of the muttering and growling of the thunder of the approaching Revolution, which was soon to overwhelm them in its depths. This noble

society of Perigueux made itself, on the contrary, extremely merry at the expense of one of its members.

A young nobleman—Gaston, Viscount Puyjoli, whose only fault (a grave one, however, in the eyes of his contemporaries) was that he was really too beautiful,—beautiful as the day!—as a summer's day of blinding sunlight and bright blue sky:—sunlight too fierce and sky too dazzlingly blue make one long to have their brightness obscured by a gray cloud or two or tempered by a sudden shower of rain.

Our poor Viscount! His history, romantic and tragic, has become a legend of his native province, and the words "Too beautiful Puyjoli" have passed into a proverb. Certainly at the age of three-and-twenty Gaston de Puyjoli, though a brave and gallant youth enough, had at this time no other qualities to attract the eyes or draw the attention of detractors upon him but this transcendent, almost insolent, beauty.

He had been the most beautiful infant. As a lad, with his pink cheeks, sparkling blue eyes and golden curls falling on his shoulders he had caused the Canoness de Gignac to exclaim, when speaking of him—"That boy is really too beautiful;—he is beautiful as a ripe apple!"

And the phrase stuck to him even now when he had become a man.

The world of society in Perigueux laughed at it and repeated it. There was nothing else with which to reproach him except this ridiculous prodigality of nature for which, after all, he was not to blame. But when a man is too handsome, he is ridiculous.

Puyjoli, however, bore a name to which ridicule had never yet attached itself. He was the second son of

the Count Monpazier who, since the death of his wife, had resided with the elder son in Paris.

The birth of Puyjoli had cost his mother her life, and the Count, who adored his wife, could never look upon the child without being reminded of her loss. He had been confided from his earliest infancy to the care of the Dowager Marchioness de Trémolat, his maternal grandmother, who adored and spoiled him.

“You are really too beautiful, Gaston,” she would say, pressing her lips on the lad’s fresh pink cheeks.

When in addition to a beauty so remarkable one adds a bashfulness almost overpowering, it will be seen that this gift of prodigal Nature to him was not at all appreciated by the recipient of it.

To know that the moment one puts one’s foot out of doors the eyes of all the passers-by will be fastened on one with an admiration as undesired as embarrassing—it was really torture to the poor lad. He therefore decided at a very early age to abjure the society of his kind entirely. To lead a life of seclusion, surrounded by his dogs, whose big, faithful, brown eyes gazed upon him with a love unmingled with unwelcome admiration.

He was, however, not allowed to carry out this plan of his. The Marchioness insisted upon her grandson’s taking his place in the society to which rank and name entitled him.

On his very first appearance in it, moreover, he fell in love—in love suddenly but irremediably—absolutely, madly in love at the very first sight of the beloved object.

Mademoiselle de Louverchal, the object of this passion of the Viscount’s, was the daughter of a nobleman

living at an hôtel a short distance from that of Madame de Trémolat!

She was a small, Greuze-like type of beauty, with saucy, red lips, blue eyes, rather scornful, and a nose tip-tilted like a flower. Gaston found her irresistible. The very day after meeting her he confided his passion for her to his grandmother, and his intention to marry her if possible.

“Oh, oh,” laughed the old lady, “but you have lost no time in falling in love, Gaston, my dear.”

It was not the day after meeting her exactly, but still very soon afterward, that Puyjoli determined to ask Mademoiselle de Louverchal's hand of her father.

With the desperate courage of a timid man, he set out at once on his errand. Dressed in a rich suit of silk and velvet, a plumed cap on his golden curls, a sword jangling at his side, Gaston was indeed a superb apparition. The distance between the two houses was not a long one; long enough, however, for him to encounter several pedestrians whose audible comments (flattering though they were) on his appearance materially disturbed his equanimity.

Quickening his footsteps to avoid hearing them, he arrived in front of the Hôtel Louverchal sooner than he anticipated. Fixing his eyes on the knocker and lowering his eyelids as would a man about plunging over a precipice, Gaston gave a knock loud enough to waken the dead.

In reply to this imperative summons the door opened directly, and a footman, seeing it was the Viscount, saluted him with a low bow and a grin of welcome.

“Ah—*té*, Monsieur le Vicomte,” exclaimed the man

—“Pardon me, but how fast your lordship must have come hither.”

Gaston looked at the man with a blank, unseeing gaze; then, as one speaking in a dream, he asked if the Marquis were visible.

“O—*té*! To you, Monsieur le Vicomte, always.”

Puyjoli felt his heart literally leaping up into his throat. How it beat—this poor timid heart. He had half a mind to turn about and run home again. To declare his hopes, to confess his love—eh, *malepeste*! but the task would be a difficult one. He began to wish that the Marquis had not been visible to him.

“I go to announce M. le Vicomte to M. le Marquis,” said the lackey.

Left alone, Puyjoli’s eyes wandered around the room into which the footman had shown him. He fell back slightly on perceiving on an easel just in front of him a pastel portrait of Mademoiselle de Louverchal in all the fresh beauty of her eighteen years. The colours, already a little faded, gave to the face of the portrait an expression of soft and tender melancholy, quite foreign to the original.

Bertha smiled and dreamed at the same moment. The eyes were smiling and mischievous, but the red lips were serious. Gaston gazed at the portrait with rapture—passionate, audacious rapture, for even the most timid lover could hardly be expected to feel abashed before a portrait.

Then, emboldened by the thought that he was quite alone with this charming image of his love, he ventured to send a kiss from the tips of his fingers toward the picture, a salute which the portrait received without a frown.

Hardly, however, had the Viscount been guilty of this act of audacity when the door opened and the Marquis entered, exclaiming :—

“ Ah, good day, Viscount. What a delightful surprise to see you at this hour ! ”

Gaston bowed, took the chair pointed out to him by the Marquis and sat twirling his plumed hat in his fingers like a tenant, behindhand with his rent, before his landlord.

A pause ensued.

M. de Louverchal, who was still in his morning costume, a flowered dressing-gown, began to excuse it, to talk of the weather, of the news of Paris, of the recent convocation of the States General, of Mirabeau, who had just published a number of incendiary pamphlets, thereby causing his worthy father, author of “ *L’Ami des Hommes*,” and who was a friend, if you please, of his (M. de Louverchal), a great deal of dissatisfaction.

And all the while he was pouring out these phrases the Marquis was puzzling his brains as to what could be the object of Puyjoli’s visit.

Puyjoli, poor fellow, in his turn, had never felt himself so miserable, so unhappy, as at this moment. He endeavoured to speak, but the words died away in his throat, contracted by terror. He endeavoured to smile, but by means of a mirror directly in front of him he could see plainly the nervous grin which distorted his visage, scarlet with embarrassment. Worse than all this, he absolutely felt the tears rising to his eyes, and was filled with alarm at the thought that he might suddenly burst out crying then and there before the Marquis’s face.

A window looking out on the street was open. For one brief moment Puyjoli thought in his desperation of jumping out of it. M. de Louverchal, however, came unconsciously to his aid by asking him politely the object of his visit.

By a supreme effort of self-control, the Viscount found himself able to reply to this interrogation, and with the precipitancy of water flowing out of an overturned bottle, all his hopes and wishes came pouring forth.

He loved Mademoiselle de Louverchal—had loved her from the first moment he set eyes upon her; loved her sincerely, deeply. He was aware that she was an heiress, but he too, as the heir of Madame de Trémolat, would one day be the possessor of a fortune still greater than hers. She was noble, but the Mopaziers were not less so. In short—here M. de Louverchal interrupted the suitor, the sight of whose face, red with emotion, caused the Marquis to feel as though he were sitting opposite a lighted brazier.

"In short, my dear Viscount, I am immensely flattered by your proposal for my daughter's hand, but the acceptance of it remains with her. She has a will of her own, I am sorry to say. If you like, I will speak to her, or here in your presence I will acquaint her with the proposal you have done her the honour to make her."

"Speak to her now and in my presence, if you please, Monsieur le Marquis," replied Gaston, quickly, with the blind courage of a bashful yet desperate lover, wishing to endure everything but suspense.

The Marquis rang for a footman, and sent for his daughter.

She appeared directly, beautiful and smiling, and curtsied saucily to Puyjoli. On her father's acquainting her with the object of the Viscount's visit to them, she began to laugh. Yes, to laugh, and to laugh loud and long. Gaston de Puyjoli was confounded at this behaviour. He was no longer red; he grew so pale that the Marquis, ashamed of his daughter, remonstrated with her gravely.

"Bertha, my child, what does this mean! Have you lost your senses suddenly?" But it was no easy matter to drive the laughter away from the lips of a petted beauty of eighteen.

At last, however, Mademoiselle de Louverchal deigned to explain the cause of her merriment.

She exhausted herself in excuses. Monsieur le Vicomte must pardon her—but it was not her fault at all. It was all the fault of the Canoness of Gignac. Why had the Canoness ventured to compare M. de Puyjoli, to a fruit? to an apple? An apple, or was it a nectarine? As if one could marry a nectarine!

"You must pardon me, Monsieur le Vicomte," she added, "but I cannot marry you. Beside you I should certainly look ugly. You are *too* beautiful." Here she began to laugh again.

"Too beautiful, Puyjoli!" exclaimed the Marquis. "A rejection could not be couched in terms more flattering."

But the Viscount had never before in his whole life felt so deeply humiliated and mortified. He gazed boldly into the face of his pretty tormentor, and he, the bashful suitor, exclaimed brutally, to the astonishment of both father and daughter,

"Very well, Mademoiselle, I must, perforce, accept

your refusal now, but I swear to you that one day you shall yet be mine. In a year, or ten, at Paris or Perigueux or Peking—it matters not where—you shall some day be mine.”

Then, bowing low and turning on his high red heels, he abruptly left the room.

Oh, the temerity of this timid, bashful lover! At this moment, Gaston de Puyjoli was in a state to draw his sword single-handed against lions.

“‘Too beautiful, too beautiful,’” he muttered through his clenched teeth, as he strode rapidly back to the Hôtel de Trémolat.

“*Is it my fault?*” he inquired later of his grandmother on telling her of his proposal to Bertha and her scornful rejection of it. “*Is it my fault* that that detestable phrase of the Canoness is to cling to me for ever? Mangrebleu!—humanity in general is quite ugly enough to satisfy the pious lady.”

Puyjoli had another auditor at this interview with his grandmother. A young girl, Clotilde Ponyade by name, who was being educated and brought up at Trémolat.

Clotilde’s father, Sergeant Ponyade, had accompanied Gérard de Monpazier to America, and been killed in battle there. He had in fact given his life for his lord, receiving in his own breast the point of the bayonet aimed at Gérard’s.

“He died *nobly*,” the Dowager was wont to say, with an emphasis on the last word.

After Ponyade’s death the Marchioness had taken his sister and child under her roof. On the death of the aunt, Clotilde had been adopted by the noble lady. A sum had been put aside for her by the Marchioness as a

marriage dowry. Clotilde was a few years older than Gaston, whom she looked upon almost as her brother.

When he had finished his narrative, this young lady, like Bertha a few hours before, began in her turn to laugh heartily.

“My dear Gaston,” she said soon after, “you should teach this scornful coquette a lesson. She has neither sense nor heart enough to understand or appreciate you ; but you will not do it. You will not return her scorn by an indifference she would find harder to endure than anger. You are not only ‘too beautiful,’ my poor Gaston, you are too kind, too magnanimous.”

It was now Puyjoli’s turn to laugh. Too beautiful, too kind, too magnanimous. Really, these eulogies of him were preposterous.

Afterward, however, on thinking them over, Clotilde’s words struck him more seriously. Was he too easy and careless in his intercourse with those about him ? Did they despise him for his good-nature as well as for his good-looks ?

Well, nature had not left him unprovided with teeth and claws. He made up his mind in the future to defend himself with these weapons. He set himself from that day to conquer his timidity, his bashfulness, his easy good-nature, which made him dislike to hurt or pain any living creature, as he would have set about training a dog to point for partridges.

He cultivated a cold, reserved demeanour in society. He used his tongue to defend himself as a sharp sword might have done. His acquaintances had chosen to make merry over his beauty ; very well, then, he for his part would show them that he found their lack of this quality as ridiculous.

However, though the inhabitants of the provinces were quite ignorant as yet of it, the Revolution, long smouldering, now broke out in Paris.

Just about this time Gaston de Puyjoli had a chance to prove to his scornful mistress that, although he was unfortunately possessed of that not-to-be-desired gift in a man, beauty, he was not lacking in those more-to-be-desired qualities, strength and courage.

Riding one day, accompanied only by her groom, Bertha's horse took fright suddenly and ran away with her. She would have been dashed to death against a tree if Puyjoli, just at that moment, like a veritable hero of romance, had not appeared from behind it, and, catching her horse by the bridle after a short but sharp struggle succeeded in subduing the frightened animal.

It was well and gallantly done, and Bertha could not refuse a word of thanks to her preserver.

“How you conquered the brute,” she murmured, with lips still white with terror.

“I have succeeded, since I saw you, in subduing something much more formidable,” he answered, smiling.

“And that is——”

“My own timidity.”

The Marquis was exceedingly grateful to Gaston for saving the life of his daughter.

“Cannot you succeed in making up your mind to marry him now?” he inquired anxiously of her, when told of the occurrence.

“Marry whom?”

“Gaston, the saviour of your life.”

Bertha's pretty face clouded suddenly. With red, pouting lips she answered quickly:——

“No—no—no, decidedly no. He is too beautiful.”

"I will wait for her," replied Puyjoli, phlegmatically, to whom the Marquis had the fatuity to repeat this conversation. "You know I will wait for her—ten years if necessary." He had, it appears, already waited two.

One evening, some weeks after, Clotilde Ponyade, in the course of conversation happened to say in Gaston's presence that there had been uprisings and rioting among the peasants in the neighbourhood of Sainte-Foy de Longas, an estate of M. de Louverchal's, where he and his daughter were at present living.

Gaston immediately set out for Sainte-Foy de Longas, first taking the precaution to hang his pistols on the pommel of his saddle.

He arrived at the village just as a crowd of angry peasants, on coming out of church, had surrounded the Marquis and his daughter. Many voices among the crowd accused him of hiding away the wheat harvested the previous year, an act of which de Louverchal, be it remarked, was quite incapable. He was a selfish and indolent man, but not in any way a cruel one. It is possible, however, that his steward had been guilty of the deed of which the famished peasants accused their lord. The tone of the crowd was growing every moment more dangerous and menacing when suddenly, as though he had dropped from the sky above their heads, Gaston de Puyjoli appeared, spurring his horse among the forest of sticks and the showers of pebbles and small stones which fell thick around the Marquis and his daughter.

Bertha, pale but resolute, had placed herself in front of her father, interposing her body as a shield to keep the missiles off him.

Puyjoli forced his horse into the angry crowd, flourishing his pistols and shouting at the top of his lungs,

“Back, back, all of you—or I fire!” His appearance, beautiful and menacing as an avenging angel, awed the peasants in spite of themselves. He was, besides, well known and liked by them as a bountiful and generous *Sieur*. They dispersed at once with cheers for the seigneur Puyjoli. The Viscount returned with the Marquis and his daughter to their *château*.

Afterward, when alone in the drawing-room with Puyjoli and his daughter, the Marquis exclaimed:

“You must, I think, confess yourself vanquished, Bertha. You can no longer refuse to marry the Viscount, my child.”

Bertha remained silent, but Puyjoli answered for her smiling:—

“Mademoiselle need not hurry herself. In a year or——”

Bertha interrupted him pettishly.

“Excuse us, Viscount, we know the rest by heart.”

“I think, Gaston,” said the Marquis, when Bertha had retired, leaving the two together, “that was rather a blundering speech of yours—that assertion that you were in no hurry to marry her.”

“Ah,” exclaimed Puyjoli, “how could she and you have misunderstood me so completely?”

The years which followed seemed to Puyjoli to pass with frightful rapidity. In times of Revolution, one lives fast. Stormy days always appear the shortest.

However, by this time Gaston had left *Perigueux* to follow Mademoiselle de *Louverchal* and her father to Paris.

The old Marchioness de Trémolat and his father were

both now dead. Except Gérard de Monpazier, his brother, whom he met at Paris on his arrival there, the young man was quite alone in the world.

His beauty and his wealth insured his success in the gay world of Paris—gay, in spite of the protests, loud and discordant as they were to the ears of their lords and masters, of an oppressed and starving people.

“This Puyjoli,” exclaimed one day one of the actresses at the “Comédie,” makes no use at all of his beauty. He lets himself be gulled and cheated by us as though he were old and ugly. There is, too, something exasperating about his beauty. Ours is really cast into the shade by it.”

Thus the days went by ; Puyjoli wasting his time and his money on some beauty of the hour, as frail and faithless, as fair.

The memory of Bertha’s lovely face was, however, never absent from him ; the sound of her silvery laugh echoed ever in his ears, and often he exclaimed,

“Ah, well, whether she will or not, some day she shall be mine.”

CHAPTER II.

THE LOVES OF THE VISCOUNT.

DURING this time of feverish and anxious waiting for Mademoiselle de Louverchal to smile upon his wooing, truth compels us to say that Puyjoli permitted himself some distractions ; nor was he above resisting the pleasant temptations which in Paris assail on every side a nobleman young, rich and superbly handsome.

His love for Bertha was his one and only passion, but while waiting for her to return it, he amused himself with other fair ones neither so coquettish nor so disdainful.

He had, also, though quite unknown to himself, inspired a deep and fervent affection in the heart of a good and modest girl, the daughter of a draper, with whom an accident had brought him in contact.

One day, sauntering about the precincts of the Champs de Mars, Puyjoli was suddenly made aware that something out of the common was going on about him. It was, in fact, the day on which Lafayette and Bailly had ordered the street to be swept down by grape-shot as a means of dispersing the populace which had given signs of rioting and turbulence. There was a great rush of the crowd to save itself, and a young girl, accompanied by a much older woman, found themselves in the midst of it, in danger of being thrown down and

trampled upon. Puyjoli had come gallantly to the rescue, throwing an arm round the waist of each of them. By sturdy elbowing, he had succeeded in pushing through the crowd and turning down a side street.

It was an act of pure humanity on his part, and he had no idea with what feelings of admiration and gratitude the girl regarded her rescuer.

“Destiny seems to will,” he thought laughingly to himself, “that I shall be a squire of dames. If I had been born three hundred years ago, I should in all probability have been a knight-errant.”

He accompanied the girl and her companion to the former’s house in the *Rue du Mail*. The girl he noticed, was beautiful, but not with the gay *espièglerie* beauty of Mademoiselle de Louverchal; there was something pensive, almost saint-like, about her.

On arriving at the draper’s shop, they found the master of it, Vincent Leroux, absent, but Germaine insisted on Gaston’s coming the next day to receive her father’s thanks for the service rendered her.

And Gaston went, partly out of idleness, partly out of curiosity. The draper, ardent Republican though he was, could not help expressing his gratitude to the *ci-devant* who had saved his daughter from being trampled on and crushed to death by the mob.

Puyjoli came soon to be a frequent visitor at the shop in the Rue du Mail, attracted thither by the admiration and esteem he felt for Germaine.

Accustomed to the facile admiration of the ladies of the theatre, he was yet ignorant of the fact that he might, quite unconsciously, excite in the bosom of this lovely girl a passion as deep and far more hopeless than that cherished by him for his disdainful mistress.

A feeling of profound pity for Germaine, compelled by cruel fate to hide her loveliness and waste her youth in the gloomy recesses of a dingy, dark shop, in the companionship of a father rude and brusque of manner and speech, even toward an only and beloved child, took possession of him.

Vincent Leroux had only of late grown morose and savage in his demeanour toward everyone. This change in him was, moreover, due to most untoward and unfortunate circumstances.

The draper, who but a few years back had been in easy circumstances, now saw ruin staring him in the face. Since the Revolution his trade had fallen off materially, and a silk firm in Lyons, for which he had been agent, had failed, greatly in debt to him. Vincent, who had sought to retrieve his losses by speculation, had been unlucky in his ventures.

Leroux was now fifty years of age—a strong, robust, florid man, of a temperament at once violent and sanguine. He had adored his wife, and now that she was dead he worshipped his daughter. For Germaine, he would say laughingly, he would be willing to upheave a mountain or commit a murder. No girl in Paris was her equal, thought this fond father.

Where in all Paris could one find a girl at once so beautiful and self-sacrificing? His anguish of mind was great, almost intolerable, at the thought that this exquisite creature was in all probability condemned to a life of bitter, hopeless poverty and sour celibacy.

Germaine, in her turn, returned with ardour her father's affection. To her he was always kind and gentle, however violent he might be to others. She knew besides, and only too well, the difficulties which

beset him. It was she who kept the books and had charge of his correspondence. How many letters she had had to write to importunate creditors, praying them to have patience, explaining, promising, beseeching. Her father's whole frame had been shaken by emotion, his voice choked with impotent rage, as he dictated them.

Germaine, raising her eyes furtively from her paper to look at him, would see that his florid face had turned purple, that great drops of sweat stood on his forehead, that he drove the nails of one hand deep into the palm of the other. How he suffered, how he writhed with rage and shame, this dear father of hers, and she his child was powerless to assuage his agony.

If the draper had only understood how to make friends when his business was prosperous they would perhaps have come to his aid now; but Leroux had really only one intimate friend, and this friend was a young man, and not a rich one nor a merchant.

André Thorel, this friend of Leroux's, was a member of the National Convention. Leroux had made his acquaintance when Thorel was an advocate of the Parliament. He had won a suit for the draper, and the two had since struck up an intimacy. Thorel was, however, a much too moderate Republican to suit his former client. He was a Girondin of the party Roland and Brissot belonged to, while Leroux was an ardent Jacobin. Had not it been for his daughter, who dissuaded him from taking part in politics, he would have been one of the leaders of the Mountain. Vincent told himself that, if he had been ambitious, he too, like Thorel, could have played a rôle in the drama of the Revolution just beginning. But no, all he wished after all, was to work, to regain his fortune, to be able to give a dowry

to his daughter on her marriage. When Thorel's wife said, smilingly, one day to him, "We must marry her off soon," Leroux experienced a sensation of bitter agony in hearing Germaine reply gently in answer,

"I do not wish to marry; I wish to remain always with my father."

In these days of torture, finding himself ruined, after a life of honest labour, Vincent Leroux would have committed suicide had not it been for his daughter. Had not it been that by this act of his she would have been rendered more desolate, more forsaken, he would have blown out his brains and ended it long ago.

The spectre of bankruptcy haunted the unhappy man continually. Neither day nor night was he free from it. Puyjoli, in his frequent visits to the shop, could hardly help perceiving this trouble of the draper's and divining the cause of it.

He perceived that some misfortune menaced Leroux and his daughter, and it was partly in the hope of being of assistance to them that his visits to the Rue du Mail were so frequent.

Ah, if Leroux had only thought to make a confidant of the viscount, or if the latter had had the courage to seek his confidence all might have been well.

Puyjoli would have joyfully assisted the unhappy father of Germaine, even to the extent of half his fortune; but Leroux never thought of looking for help from an aristocrat, and Gaston's sense of delicacy prevented his offering it unsought.

Then, too, Leroux had small love for this gallant who honoured the shop with his frequent visits. When a man was as beautiful as this *ci-devant* Viscount, he was ridiculous, he told himself.

Destiny, as ironical as ever, pursued Puyjoli to the draper's shop. One morning Leroux had discovered Germaine holding in her hand, and looking fondly down at a little nosegay of violets which Gaston had brought her, and it seemed to the anxious eyes of her father that his daughter had grown paler as well as more silent and absent of late.

It was time, he told himself, to give this citizen-viscount his *congé*. Though his girl was too poor to marry probably, she should at least be no one's mistress. "He shall not cross my threshold again, this *ci-devant*, with his golden hair and pink cheeks like a girl's. It is as a seducer, certainly, that he prowls about my dwelling."

Leroux kept the promise he made to himself. Puyjoli was made to understand with small ceremony that his visits to the shop in the Rue du Mail were not desired. When in obedience to this request of her father's, Puyjoli saw Germaine no longer, he was to find how dear the society and companionship of this girl had grown to him.

In the feverish atmosphere of Paris, the quiet of that dingy old shop reminded him of the dim old drawing-room at Perigueux, and the quiet hours he had passed there in company with the Marchioness and her ward. But, after all, Leroux was right, Puyjoli admitted to himself afterwards, in forbidding him his house. Germaine he admired and esteemed certainly, but his whole heart belonged to Bertha, and his intimacy with the former would only expose her to the censure of the envious.

But, though the Viscount's heart was constant in its affection toward Bertha, he had not hesitated, while waiting for her to accept him, to take under his protec-

tion the beautiful Sophie Clerval, the most charming of all the actresses of the Comédie Française. Certainly there could hardly be a creature more bewitching than Sophie—tall, slender, with shoulders Madame du Barry herself might have envied, laughing blue eyes, red pouting lips and the whitest teeth imaginable, she was indeed adorable.

Puyjoli was the envy of all the young men of his acquaintance. He, however, felt but a languid liking for the actress who adored him. He would in fact have quitted Paris long before if Bertha and her father had not remained there.

The Marquis de Louverchal lived shut up in his hôtel in the Chaussée d'Antin like a rabbit crouching in its burrow, not venturing even to pack up his trunks and flee to London or Kehl. He never went out. He spoke little and ate less, cautioning each morning Bonnemain, his porter, who was as timid as his master, to make as little noise in going about his daily duties as possible.

It was the desire of the Marquis that the hôtel should have the appearance of being unoccupied, and the frequent visits of Puyjoli terrified him not a little.

Mademoiselle de Louverchal, however, was as smiling and unconcerned as ever. Looking upon the Revolution as a revolt which would be quelled by the nobles eventually, she was not at all displeased at these visits of her suitor's, though she replied to all his vows and protestations with the words,

“No,—no, Viscount. It is really too absurd of you to want to marry me. You are not at all disagreeable to me,—but—” and her pretty eyes rested saucily on the panel of the door on which some flowers and fruits were painted, and the words of the Canoness of Gignac rang

again in Puyjoli's burning ears—"Beautiful as a ripe apple."

He did not permit her to finish her sentence.

"Very well—I can wait for you," he would say in the tone of a man not at all in a hurry.

"Really, Monsieur," Bertha answered, "do you know that your patience strikes one as rather impertinent?" But she laughed as she spoke, not at all displeased with her suitor's pertinacity.

These visits to Bertha, the coquetries of Sophie, the recollection of those quiet, peaceful hours spent so happily in Germaine's society, did not prevent the young man from feeling at times intolerably lonely in Paris, which nearly all of his friends and companions had by this time deserted, fleeing from the turbulent city like a flock of frightened partridges.

The days were intolerably dull and tedious to him. One morning, while strolling on the Terrace of the Feuillants, a young woman who was passing, after looking at him a moment, stopped short and holding out her hand to him exclaimed,

"Monsieur le Vicomte!"

Puyjoli stared at her in astonishment; for months now, no one had used his title in addressing him. Immediately after, however, he exclaimed joyfully,

"What, Clotilde—you here in Paris?"

A great flood of joy filled his heart. It was as though an apparition of his happy childhood had suddenly appeared before him.

As young, as handsome, as débonaire as in those far-off happy, careless days, Puyjoli stood there before the friend of his childhood.

"What a fortunate, what a delightful thing it is to

see you here. But why have you left Perigueux for Paris? Paris is just now no place for a woman like you, Clotilde."

"I," she returned, with a toss of her pretty head, "have come here to meet somebody."

"Indeed—your sweetheart?"

She held up her left hand. Through the black lace mitten, the glitter of a wedding-ring was visible.

"Married!" exclaimed Pujoli, "And I not told of it? Does your husband live in Paris?"

She pointed toward the Tuileries.

"He is there."

"Where?"

"He is a member of the National Convention."

Pujoli's face, hitherto so smiling, lengthened.

"You must know him—André Thorel, a member of the Gironde."

"Ah," he returned, coldly and absently. He had a faint recollection of having heard Thorel's name mentioned in the foyers of the Comédie, of having met with it in some of the newspapers. Possibly in the Gazette National of M. Panckouke.

The name at another time would have grated on his ears, but just at present his delight at this unexpected meeting with his old playmate left no room for sensations less agreeable.

"Republican, is not he?" he inquired, in a tone so hesitating that Clotilde could not help being struck by it.

"A Girondin," she answered.

"Well, Gironde is not a thousand leagues away from Perigord," he answered, not at all knowing what to say.

He could not help noticing, however, that he and Clo-

tilde were attracting the attention of the passers-by; as they stood there conversing some women of the people stopped and looked back curiously at them.

“What in Heaven’s name possessed you to marry a *politician*, Clotilde? If Thorel had not been a Republican—a member of the Convention—you could have presented him to me.”

“I should be happy to present *you* to Thorel whenever you please,” she returned quickly.

“It seems,” thought Gaston, “that times are changing with a vengeance. These Republicans present *us* now, and *we* are presented to *them*.” But he did not speak his thought.

“Gaston,” said Clotilde, solemnly, laying her hand on one of his, “If your life should ever be in danger, remember with my husband and me you can always find a refuge.”

“Thank you,” he returned, rather coldly, “but I have already been fortunate enough to find a friend who has made me the same offer.”

“In no other house in Paris could you be as safe as in ours.”

“Possibly; but then, you see, I have already promised Pluche, the prompter of the Comédie Française, to come to him for shelter when my head is in danger—thus——”

“Two places of refuge are, after all, better than one,” returned Clotilde, “and in the member of the National Convention you will probably find a more powerful friend and advocate than the prompter, Gaston. Our house is in the Rue des Vieux Augustins; any one can direct you to it.”

“Thank you,” replied Gaston listlessly.

"Besides," added Clotilde, "you should become acquainted with my husband if only for your brother's sake. He and André are old acquaintances—school friends."

"Monpazier a friend of your husband's?"

"They were pupils together at the college at Harcourt. They were friends and comrades there."

"Your husband has been more fortunate than I," returned Puyjoli, gravely. "Hardly had I become acquainted with my brother when he was obliged to take his departure from Paris. I regret this the more, for he is the only being in the whole world besides yourself, who cares anything at all about me."

Clotilde began to laugh softly.

"And she——"

Puyjoli grew as red as on the day when for the first time, at Perigueux, he found himself in the presence of the Marquis de Louverchal.

"Is she as disdainful as ever—the little Marchioness?" inquired Clotilde.

He tossed back his head.

"Oh," he answered, "what Puyjoli wills, fate wills. She will be mine some day. In a year or ten, at Paris or at Peking, some day I shall claim Mademoiselle de Louverchal for my own."

"Really," exclaimed Clotilde, smiling; "well, you are a lover indeed."

Though Puyjoli would have liked to detain her longer to hear more about his brother, it was evident Clotilde was in a hurry to leave him. And in truth the curious gaze of the passers-by grew every moment more annoying.

Puyjoli took the hand the young woman held out in

adieu to him, seemed for a moment about to raise it to his lips, but remembering suddenly that this form of salutation had gone out of fashion with the monarchy, he pressed the slender fingers warmly instead.

“Au revoir,” said Clotilde, drawing her hand away gently. She went away quickly, going towards the hall where the Convention was sitting, in haste, evidently, to meet her husband, who would be quitting it presently.

Puyjoli gazed after her rapidly-disappearing figure, and was surprised at finding that his sight was dimmed by the tears which had rushed suddenly into his eyes. He had had no idea until then how dear his childhood’s playmate was to him.

And so she was married, and to one of those red-capped patriots of Paris. Here, however, Gaston recalled with pleasure that, Republican or not, Thorel had been a devoted friend of his brother. “How odd things turn out,” he mused. “Well, I shall certainly go and see this Girondin, if for no other reason than that he was once Gérard’s friend. But, ugh! how could Gérard be the friend of a Red Republican?”

Monpazier, or, better still, Thorel, could have explained how the two had come to strike up an intimacy. Monpazier, who was a count—Count Gérard Claude Marie de Monpazier—as his tutor was used to speak of him respectfully,—and André Thorel, already at sixteen or seventeen years of age had been Republicans, made so by much study of the works of Tacitus and Suetonius. Ah, those happy days of old, when the two youths, the patrician and the plebeian, were quite inseparable. Would Thorel ever forget them, or the time when he was invited by Gérard’s father to spend the

holidays with his son, or the courtly bearing of the old noble toward his youthful guest? for the Count, a nobleman of liberal philosophical tendencies, had not failed to teach his son that nobility of soul was of more worth than that of birth.

After leaving college, Gérard de Monpazier had left France to fight under Rochambeau in America, had, with the down scarcely visible on his upper lip, assisted at the capitulation of Cornwallis at Yorktown, returning to France again, his soul on fire with admiration of Washington, and the Republic he had helped to found across the sea. At this time the nobleman and the commoner marched in politics almost side by side. Both longed and wished to see France free.

The old Count died shortly after his son's return, and Gérard was now the head of the family. Of his young brother down in Perigord he knew little, until he was surprised one morning by a visit from the *cadet* at his hôtel in Paris. Young, gay, astonishingly beautiful, Puyjoli had come down from Perigueux to Paris at the heels of Mademoiselle de Louverchal. Monpazier, in speaking of his brother to Thorel afterwards, thus described him :

"A boy, Thorel, a handsome, thoughtless lad. You never in your whole life saw such a good-looking fellow. But he cares about nothing but taking his pleasure."

"Like the gentlemen of the old régime," returned Thorel, "while you, you see, are a man of the present."

"He *is* a gentleman, whether of the old or new régime I do not know, but a gentleman, certainly," returned Gérard, with a warmth so unexpected it astonished his interlocutor.

That was in '89, however; since then, fate had sent Montpazier and Thorel on different ways. It had made of the stationer's son one of the rulers of France, and of the nobleman's an émigré.

An émigré not from fear, but disgust and weariness. Montpazier had desired an *evolution*, not a *revolution* of things in France, and the reality of the present had dispelled his dreams of the future. He was one of those who would have liked to regenerate a people so quietly that not a piece of furniture in a drawing-room should have been disturbed.

One day, frightened, horrified with what he saw going on round him in Paris, he had quitted it suddenly for London. He got, by-the-bye, a rather cold reception from the other émigrés who had not been so tardy in taking their departure. Puyjoli, however, had refused to accompany his elder.

"Later," he had replied, "at present I find Paris exceedingly agreeable. There are still some pretty women here, whom the tri-coloured ribbons and red caps suit admirably. Run off to London where the sky is lead-coloured, and the rain falls five days out of the seven? No, thank you, not yet."

The real reason, however, of his staying on in Paris was that M. de Louverchal still remained, cowering in his hôtel next door to the one in which Mirabeau had died, believing, like the ostrich, which seeks safety by hiding its head in the sand, that if he never went out, if he never saw anybody, he himself would be forgotten by those outside.

His daughter, in her turn, could never be induced to consider the Revolution seriously. "Why give one's self the trouble of running away to return again almost

immediately? This state of things cannot last. It is a tempest of which fury will soon be spent. Do not you think as I do, M. de Puyjoli?"

Puyjoli, bowing deeply, would answer:

"As you please, Mademoiselle. Where you go, however, I shall go. To-morrow, or ten years from now——"

"At Paris or at Peking—I know, I know."

"Exactly, Mademoiselle," he would answer, gravely, on which she would burst out laughing.

After he had gone, her father would remark, gravely:

"In your place, I should marry that youngster, as a reward for his fidelity."

"We shall see," one day Mademoiselle de Louverchal replied unexpectedly.

Ah, if Puyjoli could only have heard that 'we shall see!' But unfortunately he did not. At that very moment he was with Sophie Clerval, in her apartment. He was at supper with the actress. Throwing his arm around her slender waist, and pressing his lips to her white shoulder, he exclaimed:

"The one thing which makes you ladies of the stage so charming is that you have no coquetries, you have only caprices. One needs only to gratify them and you are content."

"Are you so vain as to imagine that we are satisfied with you because we find no fault?" she inquired, laughingly.

"That is only another reason you are so charming. Look," he touched the fresh, rosy lips of the actress with the glass of champagne he held in his hand, "your love is like that—sparkle and froth."

"And the love of the women of your set—do you

know what it is like?" she returned, pertly, "Soup, soup, lukewarm."

"You are too ridiculous," he exclaimed, embracing her.

"And you too beautiful," she returned. "I adore you as if I were a school-girl of fifteen."

Then, laying her pretty powdered head on his shoulder, and gazing up at his face, bent down towards her, with eyes bright with sudden springing tears, she continued playing with the curls of his golden hair.

"After all, you know, it is not improbable that these two heads, yours and mine, may at some not-far-distant day fall upon the scaffold. Such handsome heads, too—is not it a pity?"

"There is only one way to make your thought less lugubrious," he replied gayly, "that they fall, as they do now—together."

"Yes, in a kiss," she returned passionately, seizing his head in both her hands.

CHAPTER III.

THE TWO BROTHERS.

PUYJOLI had an apartment which, thanks to Sophie Clerval, he rarely occupied, in the Rue Richelieu, called, since the Revolution, the *Rue de la Loi*.

To the porter's interrogatories,—

“Citizen Migrayon, what keeps the *ci-devant* Viscount still in Paris,—not politics, I hope?” Puyjoli's valet, an old servant of Madame de Trémolat, would answer:—

“Ah—bah—politics! He cares nothing for politics. It is the women.”

“Ah, an admirer of the fair sex—the Viscount?”

“Is not it natural—such a handsome young gentleman?”

Migrayon, however, was not quite right in his supposition that his master cared nothing for politics. Puyjoli did not in fact occupy himself actively with the affairs of the nation, but he dabbled a little in politics—that is as they were represented on the stage.

In January of '93 he was one of the spectators at the Théâtre de la Nation, who had set themselves to applaud most vigorously Fleury in the caste of *Fortis*, and Laroche as *Duricrène*, in Laya's drama “*Amis des Lois*.”

For Puyjoli, as for the greater part of the audience,

under the disguise of the odious character of Duricrène, Citizen Marat was quite recognizable.

Larochelle's portrayal had been received with such frantic applause that the play had been suppressed after the first night's representation by order of the censor of the Commune.

On the next evening a furious demonstration had been made in favour of the suppressed piece by the audience. They refused to listen to the performance given on the programme; drowning the player's voices by vociferous shouts for the interdicted drama.

And when, in reply to this imperative demand of theirs, the manager of the theatre had come before the curtain and attempted to read the order of the Commune, he had been interrupted by a perfect storm of hisses and cat-calls. "Amis des Lois! Amis des Lois!" resounded from all parts of the theatre.

It was found necessary to send Santerre with a company of the National Guards to the playhouse in the hope of putting an end to the tumult.

It was Puyjoli who, when the General, in full regimentals, entered the theatre, had greeted him with the cry, taken up by all those around him of "General Froth—General Froth," in allusion to Santerre's former occupation as a brewer.

It was a *jeu d'esprit* daring enough to send its author's head to the guillotine.

"Why, Citizen Pluche, do not you laugh with the rest of us?" exclaimed Puyjoli to the prompter as the two met in the foyer of the theatre that evening.

"I never laugh at anything dangerous, Monsieur le Vicomte," answered the other, pronouncing the title half under his breath.

“Speak out, Pluche,” returned the other, recklessly, “Much prompting has made your voice as hoarse as a raven’s.”

Pluche shook his head gravely.

“In times like these he who hears the most and speaks the least is the best off.” Then the prompter added kindly :

“Listen to me a moment, Monsieur de Puyjoli. “If you should ever be in any danger, and from your reckless behaviour I fear you are liable to at any moment, remember that my humble dwelling will always be open to you.”

“Agreed, Pluche ! What a good fellow you are !”

After all, it was an offer not to be disdained. Puyjoli, continuing as he did his campaign for *Amis des Lois* and against the civil authorities, went so far with other young men of his age and set, on the players refusing to act in the proscribed drama, as to scramble over the heads of the orchestra on to the stage, and there, book in hand, to read at the top of his lungs the different parts of the drama. Laya, the author, in consequence of this, was denounced before the Convention.

One day, however, shortly after the denunciation, a man appeared at the house of the dramatist, whose appearance, so wild and savage was it, seriously alarmed Madame Laya. This stranger, however, looking at her with a kind glance from under his beetling brows, said :—

“Do not be alarmed. I am Danton, and a friend of your husband’s. Tell him if he is in danger, to come to me and I will protect him.”

In the meanwhile, our hero continued his headlong career. He continued to think what he pleased, and to

speaking aloud what he thought. He would have thrown his life away for a *bon mot* or a wager. After all, what had he to live for? His brother was an exile; they would probably never see each other again, and Bertha, whom he adored, laughed at him and scorned him.

As for Sophie Clerval—ah, well, she would console herself very quickly for the loss of him, so pretty as she was too, Sophie.

One morning, however, while still in his chamber, Migrayon came to tell him that some one desired to see him.

“Some one to see me, who is it?”

“*Pio dé ségur*,” exclaimed Migrayon, in his *pâtois* of Perigord, so dear to the ears of his master,—“but he looks like a *procureur*.”

“Let your *procureur* enter, Migrayon,” answered his master gaily.

Directly afterwards the door opened and a man entered, at sight of whom Puyjoli uttered an exclamation of joy.

“You—here in Paris!”

The new-comer laid a finger on his lips and glanced warningly at the valet.

“No danger, it is Migrayon, my brother,” returned the other, embracing him.

“I thought you were in London,” said Gaston, when the two were alone together.

“I left there three days ago.”

“To keep me company in Paris?”

“To fight in La Vendée!”

“Ah,” exclaimed Puyjoli, gaily, “how gladly I would go with you if I could only persuade Mademoiselle de Louverchal to make the journey with me to Brittany.”

“Still in love in that quarter?”

“Still—and to my life’s end, my brother.”

“Ah,” returned the other, “who knows how soon our lives may end.” There was a cadence of melancholy in his tone. The next moment he smiled, however, and began to relate in tones as gay as those of Puyjoli himself why he had come to France.

He had been living very quietly in London, waiting for the storm in Paris to blow over. One day some young noblemen, about starting for Brittany to join the army there, permitted themselves before departing, the pleasantry of sending to the Count’s lodgings a distaff, as the peasants of old were in the habit of doing when their lord tarried too long in his castle, instead of sallying out to defend his vassals. The Count had, on that, followed the senders to Dover. He had fought and wounded two of the number, then embarked in a few days for France.

On disembarking under a false name at Calais, Monpazier had determined, before joining his comrades in Brittany, to visit his brother at Paris.

“But I fear,” he said suddenly, “I have chosen an inopportune moment for my visit.”

“Why?”

“Listen,” he opened the window wide as he spoke. The roar of cannon, the sound of hoarse voices and the heavy tramp of feet were audible.

“Well,” returned Puyjoli, quite calmly.

“There is rioting out there in the streets, and—there, listen—the alarm guns. I heard something last night about an insurrection of the populace and an attack upon the Convention, but you, of course, will know more about it than I.”

“1.—I know nothing at all about what is going on here in Paris. I never read the newspapers. I occupy myself simply with the playhouses, where I applaud the plays which please me, and hiss those which displease me. If at any time I can serve my king, I am ready to put my life to the touch to do so. But as things are, I am simply in Paris because Mademoiselle de Louverchal chooses to remain here. If you can persuade the Marquis to set out with his daughter for Brittany, I shall not be long after them, but while Bertha remains in Paris, I stay too.”

Monpazier, whilst his brother was speaking, examined him closely. Certainly there could be no one handsomer or more reckless of his life than this young nobleman. He would mount the guillotine surely at some day not far distant, and he would mount it smiling. Monpazier could not help admitting to himself that he, on his way to join the combatants in La Vendée, did not run half so much danger as his brother here in Paris. And yet the fighting would be warm enough down there in Brittany.

The administration of the department of Deux-Sèvres had just declared La Vendée in a state of insurrection. The whole country there was aflame.

“If our friends act promptly and courageously, as I see no reason to doubt, we shall soon march down on Paris and proclaim the King again.”

“God grant they may. Give me your hand, and with it the promise of a speedy meeting again at the Place Louis XV.”

“Well, we are not there yet or near it. Those rascals of Jacobins are full of enthusiasm, courage, firmness. They have set France on fire. Since I have been here

it seems as if the very soil were hot and burned my feet. From Calais to Paris the people are up in arms fighting for their liberty, their rights. After all, it is they who make the France of to-day. We—you and I, Gaston—belong to the old order which is passing away.”

“And yet you have come here to fight against the people.”

“Because I happened to be called Gérard de Monpazier. One does not desert the ranks on the eve of a battle. One does not run away from one’s friends when one sees them in danger of death or extermination.”

“And how do you expect to reach La Vendée?”

“How can I tell? by the help of Providence. To-day you behold me in the habit of a man of law; to-morrow, perhaps, I may be wearing the red cap of a Jacobin or the tri-coloured scarf of a member of the Convention, but I shall arrive there. I must get there,” he added in a resolute tone, “if for no other reason than to deliver the dispatches of which I am the bearer.”

“Dispatches!” exclaimed Puyjoli.

“Yes.”

“Dispatches, and concealed upon your person! Gérard, that is madness. If you should be arrested——”

“Nothing would be found on me.”

He drew a pistol from his pocket and showed it to his brother.

“The dispatches are here.”

“Inside the pistol?”

“As wadding. If I should happen to be arrested, I shall draw my pistol and fire it off in the air, and the

dispatches will be burned. If I am not arrested, they will reach their destination."

Puyjoli had taken the pistol into his hand and was regarding it closely.

It was small, but of rather clumsy make. On its shining handle a female head was carved.

"Pretty—the head."

"Ah," exclaimed Monpazier, laughing, "I thought you would not fail to notice the head."

"Do you on your part, Gérard, never think of marrying? Have you found, perhaps in London, some pretty powdered head, the original of this one, which has succeeded in turning yours?"

"No," returned Gérard, gravely, "I do not trouble myself about the morrow—and, besides, it is also very probable that there will be very few more to-morrows for you and me."

"Oh, prophet of evil," returned Puyjoli, "you must not croak here. Of course there will be many to-morrows for you and me, and smiles from rosy lips, and glances from bright eyes. When this drama of the Revolution is played to the end, we, you and I, shall have time to play one of our own—a drama where love and faithfulness shall be properly rewarded at the falling of the curtain, my brother. These dispatches of yours contain cheerful tidings for our friends in Vendée, I am sure."

"They give instructions to the Vendean chiefs concerning the carrying on of the war down there, and a complete plan of the campaign as arranged by the Jacobins, and the number of troops they will be able to send against us."

Monpazier interrupted himself suddenly to listen

more attentively to the noises in the streets below—the thunder of the alarm guns, and the loud tolling of the tocsin.

“Decidedly,” he said, smiling, “something extraordinary must be going on in Paris to-day.”

“I fear so,” returned Puyjoli.

He added directly, however, with a shrug of his shoulders, “Or I hope so, for who can tell how soon the storm may rage itself out and a calm succeed? which would prove the truth of my assertion that there still remain many to-morrows for us both.”

He had hardly, finished speaking, leaning with his brother on the broad window-seat, looking out curiously into the street below, when a knock was heard at the door and Migrayon, looking pale and agitated, entered.

“Well, Migrayon,” inquired the Viscount, carelessly, “what is it? You are of the colour of the royal standard itself, if one may dare to remember that there ever was such a thing as a king’s flag.”

The poor fellow was indeed deathly pale, and trembled violently.

“Ah, Monsieur le Vicomte,” he returned.

“Well—what? There is fighting in the streets again! The towers of Notre Dame have fallen in! Citizen Danton has become suddenly deaf from the sound of his own voice—or at the noise of the alarm-guns! What is it? speak.”

“You have been denounced, Monsieur le Vicomte, before the Commune,” answered the frightened servant.

“Denounced—I?”

“Before the Commune, Monsieur, denounced for having read that play, ‘Amis des Lois,’ on the stage of the theatre.”

“Yes, I did read it,” he answered laughingly, “I read it. I read the rôle of Sainte-Prix, and I read it extremely well, too. Sophie Clerval complimented me highly on my rendering of it!”

“Yes, but,” stammered Migrayon, “You were recognised, and you have been denounced before the Section. You were described as a *ci-devant*, tall, well-dressed, remarkably handsome, with a complexion like a ripe apple.”

“Damn it!” exclaimed Puyjoli, wrathfully, “could not the “*gentleman*” who denounced me have been a little less explicit in his description? Ah, Messieurs les Jacobins, be kind enough at least to spare me the banal witticism of the worthy Canoness of Gignac!”

“Monsieur le Vicomte, the porter, who is a worthy man, told me likewise that a detachment of gendarmes will be here presently to search this apartment, which it is reported, however, you seldom occupy.”

“I wonder Sophie was not denounced to the Section. It is all her fault I am here so seldom.”

“They may be here any moment, Monsieur le Vicomte; you cannot leave here too quickly.”

“Leave here—why? I am quite satisfied with the apartment.”

“Ah, Monsieur le Vicomte, I beg of you, no more of this bravado. The porter has risked his liberty, perhaps his life, in warning you.”

“There is not a moment to be lost,” continued his brother; “you can escape more easily now the streets are in an uproar. So you and I must part, Gaston, though I had hoped to spend the night here with you. Well, I know a place where I can find a shelter.”

“Where?”

“Promise me first that you will leave this place directly.”

“I promise you; and Migrayon, my lad, take my advice, and do not stop here long after your master. But if the gendarmes should find you and interrogate you of my whereabouts, you may give them my compliments and say I am off for the East Indies. They can, if they choose, send a brigade after me to Pondicherry.”

“Have you money, Gaston?” inquired his brother.

“Why?”

“Because I can let you have some. I have some here in my belt.”

“Thank you; I am in funds also. And now,” he continued, with deep and sudden emotion, “are you quite certain about this place where you are going to seek a refuge being a safe one?”

“Oh, quite safe.”

“Where is it you are going? To one of our friends?”

“No; to a Republican.”

“The devil!” returned Puyjoli, frowning anxiously.

“One of the members of the National Convention.”

“Ah, I know who it is. André Thorel.”

“A friend and former schoolmate.”

“Can you trust him?”

“As I could you.”

“But his damned political convictions?”

“To a man like Thorel, friendship is a sacred thing. His hospitality is like that of an Arab chief. I am his friend, but if I were his enemy, I should be safe beneath his roof because I have thrown myself on his hospitality.”

Puyjoli did not seem reassured by this declaration of his brother's.

"I wish you could find another place to go to."

"Are you beside yourself, Gaston? Where in the world could I find a safer hiding-place than underneath the roof of a National deputy?"

"Still, it seems a foolhardy thing to do. Something like a sheep seeking shelter in the den of a wolf."

"Monsieur le Vicomte, Monsieur le Vicomte," interposed Migrayon, anxiously.

"Yes, yes," returned Puyjoli, quickly. "Well, brother, we must part. Part, and who knows when we shall meet again. Reward the porter, Migrayon, well for his fidelity, and thank him from me. After all, Gérard, as Thorel's wife is Clotilde Ponyade, you could not have found a securer hiding-place. By-the-way, I met her in the street accidentally the other day, and she also gave me to understand that if I were in need of a hiding-place her doors would be open to me, so if my other friend fails me, I may be glad to hide myself behind the petticoats of citizeness Thorel. Poor Clotilde—her father gave his life for you, and here am I ungrateful enough to think of putting her head in danger to save my worthless one."

Then, suddenly dropping his rallying tone, he seized his brother's hands in both his own, and, looking long and earnestly at him, exclaimed:

"Good-bye, then, Gérard, for the present."

"Oh, we shall see each other soon again," returned the other. "When the hue-and-cry about you is over, you can come to André Thorel's for news of me. You know where he lives?"

"Rue des Vieux Augustins."

"Oh, my brother!" exclaimed Puyjoli, throwing his arms around Monpazier, and pressing him to his heart,

“if any harm befall you at Thorel’s, I shall move heaven and earth to revenge you.”

“How you talk, Gaston; believe me, no harm can happen to me at Thorel’s. I wish you had as safe a refuge.”

“Well, God bless you—and good-bye.”

The brothers clasped hands again a moment, Migrayon standing by and impatiently urging their departure.

As they stepped out into the street, the rolling of the arms, the heavy noise of the alarm-guns, the booming of the great tocsin-bell filled the air, and as the brothers were about to turn and go in opposite directions Puyjoli, reckless as ever, could not resist exclaiming,

“One consolation remains to us; this fanfaronnade is not *all* on our account, Gérard.”

CHAPTER IV.

CITIZEN PLUCHE.

ALL day long, citizen Pluche, prompter at the *Théâtre de la Nation*, occupied one of the houses at the bottom of a dark alley of the Rue Hauteville (a little house with a small garden, in which was an arbour). All day since sunrise of this day in May, the bell of Notre Dame tolling the alarm, the booming of the cannon and the members of the Sections solemnly chanting the Marseillaise, had been audible, and Pluche had shuddered at these ominous sounds. Signs and sounds betokening not a drama, but a tragedy, to be played not on the stage of the theatre, but in the streets of Paris.

Citizen Pluche was, however, used by this time to rioting, bloodshed and tumults in the streets. On his way to and from the theatre he was obliged to pass by the Club of the Cordeliers. Once, indeed, he had accidentally jostled against a tall, fierce-looking man, who, stopping under the window of the dwelling *No. 30*, had shouted out in a superb, deep voice—a capital voice for a tragedy-hero, Nicholas had thought on hearing it—

“Halloa, Marat,” and in response to this call, a window on the first floor had been opened and a livid, sallow face surmounted by a dirty night-cap, had appeared, while a thin, squeaking voice answered:—

“Yes, I am coming.”

It was Georges Danton on his way to the Cordeliers, shouting to Jean-Paul Marat to accompany him thither.

Ever after, Nicholas Pluche could not resist raising his eyes as he passed by this window. From the door there floated a smell of printers' ink and damp paper. Over the balcony of cast-iron, curious to relate, a *fleur de lis* was sculptured in the stone-work, and to Pluche's excited fancy, the petals of the flower seemed to encircle a thick-lipped, flat-nosed face resembling that of the former surgeon and present journalist and member of the National Convention.

Pluche had got up early this warm morning, had finished his usual work in his garden before the heat of the sun had grown too intolerable, and was now sitting with his wife, Babet, in the arbour, breakfasting.

On the table before him was the "*Moniteur*" of the evening before; it bore the date, Tuesday, 30th May, 1793, or the year 1 of the Republic.

He had finished reading the journal and was gazing contentedly about him. He was a man of sixty odd, but still fresh and healthy as he was a score of years ago. His wife was nearly twenty years younger—a comely dame, with bright eyes, a fresh complexion and a ready smile.

Pluche threw back his head with an expression of contentment with himself and his surroundings. From his perruque floated in the summer air a little halo of hair powder. Pluche, before being a prompter had been an actor, but, to the great delight of Babet, he had ceased to tread the boards shortly after their marriage. He, however, still kept his stage costumes hung up in his wardrobe. He often took them out and shook and brushed them carefully, his eyes gazing fondly on them.

Now, as he sat there in his arbour, memory carried him back to the day, eighteen years before, when he and Babet were married. He remembered how slender and fair she looked in her white marriage robes. He remembered, and smiled at the recollection, how the curé advised him to write down in the register his profession as "musician" and not "actor." This, however, was partly true, Pluche being an admirable performer on the violin. He had, too, a friend whose taste for music and admirable performance on the flute had formed a firm bond of friendship between the two.

Médard, Pluche's friend, was one of the players in the orchestra of the Théâtre de la Nation. When playing their duets together, the two would forget that a Revolution was raging around them.

"What a noise those guns are making! Oh, shall we ever have peace and safety in Paris again, I wonder? I am sick of it all. I never lie down at night, but I wonder if you and I shall not be dragged off to prison the next morning," exclaimed Babet suddenly, coming from the kitchen into the garden, and joining her husband in the summer-house.

The government won't molest us."

"Perhaps not."

"I am a good patriot; I have not an enemy in the world that I know of. I see nobody except Médard, whose Christian name is Maximilian—the first name also of Citizen Robespierre—what in the world, then, are you afraid of, Babe?"

"I am afraid of Publicola."

"Publicola Verdier?" Pluche shrugged his shoulders slightly under his flowered dressing-gown. "Publicola is a friend of ours."

“Too great a friend. He never leaves us in peace a moment. He is a neighbour, but a very tiresome one. He is always prowling about here quite unceremoniously. The most pernicious member, too, of the Section. The very sight of him makes me shudder.”

“Bah—Verdier is not so bloodthirsty as he would like to have us believe him. He is an old friend of mine; I knew him formerly when he was an actor of small parts in the provinces. At that time I was able to show him some little kindnesses. It is true that that is no reason for trusting him, but rely on me, Babet, I can take care of you.”

Babet, for all answer, smiled on her husband—a smile of the most perfect trust and confidence.

“You see,” he went on, “from my wooden box into which I crawl every evening at the theatre, though I can only get glimpses now and then of Mademoiselle Contat’s shoulders.”

“The shoulders?”

“Or M. Dagincourt’s legs,” Pluche made haste to add. “I reflect—I dream—and in prompting mechanically the words of Corneille or Molière, which I know by heart, I philosophize on what is going on about me.”

The distant rolling of the drums, carried by the May breeze, was audible in this garden, filled with the odours of the flowers of spring.

“And I tell myself that men are, on the whole, less wicked than they would like to appear. Every human being has some good hidden away in him—and Verdier, that *mistral* of a Verdier, with his lungs of brass and his savage looks, is probably at bottom not much more cruel or relentless than the rest of us.”

“That depends upon whom you call ‘us,’” returned

Babet, quickly. She had hardly finished speaking, when the door leading from the room into the garden opened, and a fat little man, quite out of breath from walking on this sultry morning, appeared. He stood there, leaning on his cane and fanning his flushed face with his cocked hat, to which a huge knot of tri-coloured ribbon was affixed.

“Ah, Monsieur Médard,” cried Babet.

“How did you get in, Citizen Médard?” inquired Pluche, of the new-comer.

“Through the gate—it was ajar, and I pushed it open. I could not, however, help thinking,” he continued, “how imprudent it was of you to leave it open while you are sitting here talking together in the garden. The gate left ajar on a day like to-day—Heavens! but you are imprudent!” And the visitor cast his eyes heavenward as though invoking help from that quarter.

Poor Babet had turned quite pale at the thought of her carelessness.

“The gate ajar,” she murmured, “for anybody to enter who chooses to do so—how could I have been so careless!”

“I hope you shut the gate and locked it after you,” exclaimed Pluche to the new-comer.

“Of course, of course,” the little man answered promptly.

“Won’t you join us at breakfast?” Pluche continued, seeing that his wife was still too flustered to speak.

“Thank you—no. I have already breakfasted. I have no appetite,” he added, in a tone which gave his hearers to understand that his walk through the streets had taken it away.

“What is the tumult outside about?” inquired Nicholas.

The new-comer shrugged his shoulders.

“My faith, I don’t know. I know nothing at all, you know, of what is going on about me. Shut up in my office at the Hôtel de Ville, I do the work apportioned me and ask no questions. I never read a newspaper when I can help it. I buy one every day, of course, to have it seen sticking out of my coat pocket; but read it—*no thank you!* I read only music, as you know. I concern myself chiefly with the divine works of Chevalier Glück, or Citizen Glück, as one must call him now-a-days. Still, it seems to me as if to-day something more important than usual were afoot.”

“What?”

“Ah, that I do not know,” he returned, shaking his head solemnly. He added, speaking under his breath as though relating some important secret, instead of a fact already discussed publicly by the forty-eight Sections of the city, “I think there is a rumour regarding the dissolution of the Committee of Twelve.”

“Ah,” interrupted Pluche, setting down the cup from which he had been drinking. “To bring about the dissolution of the Committee of Twelve is to aim a direct blow at the Girondins.”

“True, such is the intention of the Mountain. On the way from the Rue Éperon up to your door, I have heard nothing but threats and cries of denunciation against Brissot and his friends and followers.

“The devil,” exclaimed Nicholas, “I fear there is danger in store for André Thorel.”

“Who is this citizen Thorel?” asked Médard artlessly. It was quite evident that Médard had spoken

the truth when he affirmed a moment or two before that he took no interest in politics and never read the newspapers.

“ Citizen André Thorel is one of the members of the National Convention. A man who at the age of thirty, has already won a place for himself in the history of his country. For the last month he has been among the foremost of his party to oppose the ferocious and unprovoked attacks upon it by the Mountain. It is quite evident, my dear Médard, that you do not read the newspapers, as you are ignorant of André Thorel’s fame.”

“ You know him, then ? ” inquired Maximilian.

“ Yes, we are very well acquainted with him and his wife—Babet and I!—Before we came here, we occupied an apartment in the same house with them in the Rue Vieux Augustins. The citizen Thorel and his wife were just married. Such a pretty woman, Citizeness Thorel. They had the apartment below us. There was a large garden attached to the house, with a pavilion in it. Thorel and his wife had hired this with the garden. They still live in the house where we first became acquainted with them. Many a time have Babet and I watched them, walking arm-in-arm at twilight in this garden. It was a pretty sight, and reminded us of our youth and our early married days, eh, Babet ?

“ It was in the year ’90 that we lived in the house in the Rue Vieux Augustins. The year I was sick with typhoid fever, you remember it, Médard.”

“ Yes, indeed. I never thought you would get over it.”

“ Thorel insisted upon it that the physician I had knew nothing about my case. He bled me and re-bled me till I was at death’s door—the Sangrado.”

“Citizen Thorel sent his own physician to us, who soon put Nicholas on his legs again. I shall never forget it. And who is it,” she inquired angrily, “who wishes to do him an ill turn—who is it?” she demanded in a tone so violent that her husband looked in surprise at her.

“It is—Citizen Marat, who leads the attack against the Girondins.”

“Marat!” If a bomb had suddenly tumbled into that blooming, fragrant, peaceful garden, Citizeness Pluche could hardly have been more affrighted.

“Marat—Jean-Paul Marat—that man ferocious as a tiger.” She already saw in her mind’s eye Thorel arrested, dragged before the Tribunal, ascending the steps of the guillotine. And Clotilde, whom she had first seen in the white robes of a bride, wearing the sombre habiliments of a widow.

“Poor Citizeness Clotilde,” exclaimed her husband, mournfully.

Just then, like a great storm breaking over the city, the loud beating of drums burst on their ears.

“What does it mean?” exclaimed Babet, her face livid with terror.

“That,” replied her husband, his face as ghastly as her own,—“that is the general alarm.”

“That means more fighting, more bloodshed in the streets of Paris,” said Médard.

“It is only too likely,” returned his friend, sadly. “As to-day is Friday, and I had a headache, I got leave of absence from the office. If this commotion outside in the streets continues, I must ask you to put me up for the night.”

“With pleasure, my dear Médard. Nothing could give us more pleasure.”

“And here with you it is as happy and peaceful as in Heaven, almost. Will the theatre be opened to-night?” he inquired later.

“Of course; though every day tragedies are enacted in the streets around us, the public are no less greedy to behold the mimic ones of the stage.”

“Shall you go there?”

“Without doubt. Why should I be absent from my post?”

“But if anything should happen to you on the way thither?”

“What could happen to a poor devil of a prompter? There is no fear of Jacobins or Girondins troubling their heads about me. The hurricane never uproots the blades of grass. Have you brought your flute with you, Citizen Médard?”

“Certainly,” returned the little man, drawing the pieces out of his pocket and beginning to screw them together.

“My violin, please, Babet.”

“What shall we play?”

“Oh, anything, anything to shut our ears to the clamours outside.”

“Well, Médard, are you ready?”

“When you are;” and the two attacked gaily a rigadon of Dardame’s.

Their feet beat time to the measure. The sun, mounting higher and higher, made the buckles on their shoes glitter. The queue of Médard’s wig danced gaily up and down on the collar of his coat, and Nicholas’s head was soon encircled with a nimbus of hair-powder.

Now and then above the gay music the boom of the cannon could be heard, or the hoarse chanting of the

Marseillaise. And yet the two old friends sat there, deaf, regardless of all about them, the gay notes of the rigadoon soaring aloft like those of a lark singing amid a tempest.

Just then, however, the loud and heavy booming of a bell caused the players to break off suddenly, and stare at each other with white, terror-stricken countenances.

“The tocsin—the tocsin,” whispered Babet, hoarsely.

“Allegro! allegro!” exclaimed Pluche, stamping his foot; “Go on, friend Médard. Why did you leave off?”

But Babet shuddered. The roar of the cannon was not so frightful to her as the deep and solemn tolling of the tocsin.

“Poor Citizen Thorel,” she sighed; “Poor Clotilde. What will become of them?”

CHAPTER V.

THE GIRONDINS.

THE party to which André Thorel belonged in the Convention of the Nation had on this Friday, the 31st of May, experienced a crushing defeat at the hands of the Jacobins—a defeat from which they were never to recover.

Stanislas Maillard, the thin, acid man, leader of the women's mob at Versailles in October of two years before, organizer of the September massacre of the year before; Fournier, the American, L'Huilier, urged on by Rose Lacombe, one of the women who had demanded from the tribune that females should be armed with pick-axes and poignards in order that the Girondins might be exterminated, while the men who hesitated to wreak vengeance on them might stop at home to sew and rock the cradle, and Varlet—the ferocious Varlet—were the leaders of this attack upon their opponents.

“Let the people march,” exclaimed Varlet, “at the beating of the drum, to the Convention, and extirpate these Girondins, Federalists, accomplices of the Federalists, accomplices of the traitor Dumouriez and of the rebels in La Vendée.”

Marat's journal accused Gorsas, Pétion and their friends of being guilty of the September massacres. The gazette edited by Hébert also made the astonishing

statement that the night before the massacre, the Girondins had bought up all the bread baked in Paris by the bakers, and thrown it into the Seine.

The evening before, Thorel, in crossing the *Pont Neuf* had heard a boot-black, who, upon his blacking-box, the better to be seen by his audience, was reading aloud to a crowd which had gathered about him, from a copy of *Ami du Peuple* that "Brissot, (Listen to this now, citizens,) Brissot has stolen the diamonds of Garde Meuble."

"Ah, these famous diamonds, which disappeared, flew away, *evaporated* you know, citizens, it was Brissot, Monsieur Brissot de Warville, who lined his pockets with them."

And the crowd shouted hoarsely,

"Down with Brissot!"

"He is accused by the *Ami du Peuple* of having sold these diamonds and having placed the money at interest in foreign banks." At these words the crowd bel-
lowed hoarsely,

"*Death* to Brissot!"

"When the cries had died away, the reader continued,

"And that rascal—that hypocrite Brissot—do you know now where he lodges—that Brissot? why, in the king's former palace."

André had listened in silence until now, when, hurling himself into the midst of the maddened, infuriated crowd and planting himself before the boot-black, whose head, as he stood on his box, was just on a level with André's, he exclaimed,

"May I explain to you, citizen, how Brissot lodges in a king's palace." The boot-black, astounded, made no answer, but stared at him in silence. The crowd,

too, had grown suddenly mute, eager to hear what this new actor on the scene might have to say. They eyed him curiously—this young man dressed handsomely in a coat of bright maroon cloth, a white waistcoat, his hair unpowdered, long and blonde, surmounted by a cocked hat, ornamented with buckles and a great tri-coloured cockade. They pressed and gathered round him. André was quite unarmed.

“Citizen,” he began, addressing the boot-black, “Brissot has, in fact, received at the hands of the Nation—what? A garret in the palace of St. Cloud. A garret which the aristocrat occupies in company with the rats which hold revel there. And as, in spite of his having stolen the diamonds of which Jean-Paul Marat in his journal accuses him, he has but three shirts to his name, he washes the two soiled ones himself in one of the fountains of the Park and hangs them out of the garret-window to dry. This is the simple truth, I can vouch for it.”

“But you who tell us this,” inquired the former reader of the journal, “how do you know this? Are you a friend of Brissot’s—or Brissot himself, perhaps?”

“I am a friend of his,” returned Thorel, gazing undaunted at the lowering faces which surrounded him.

This avowal of his excited them to frenzy. With a hoarse cry of, “A friend of Brissot—a Federalist—a Girondin!” the mob pressed menacingly upon him. There were shouts of:—

“To the river!—throw him into the river!—the Girondin! over the bridge with the traitor!” Grasping his stick tightly and swinging it above his head, André stood his ground, calling in a loud voice as though before the tribunal:

“I am Thorel, André Thorel, Member of the National Convention. Let him who dares lay a hand on the representative of the People and of the Law.” At these words, by a quick, involuntary movement, the crowd drew back suddenly. As yet, a representative of the People was held sacred by the people. Those who had threatened to throw him into the river drew back respectfully to let him pass. One or two indeed, still muttered between their clenched teeth, “A Girondin! the people have had enough of such representatives,” but those around paid no heed to them.

On his return home, in recalling the scene which he had witnessed, André Thorel remarked to his wife,

“I shall be very much surprised if to-morrow will not be a bad day for us Girondins.”

“A bad day for the Girondins, why, André?” she repeated anxiously.

“The Jacobins have advised the populace to rise for what they call a ‘moral insurrection,’ a display of force simply, and eject us from the Convention. But when loaded guns are in unskilled hands, they are apt to go off suddenly. There is certain to be an attack made on the Convention against our party to-morrow, and will you believe it, some of our party have been in favour of our resigning in order to avoid the decree of accusation which will, in all probability, be launched at our heads. But I, for one, will not resign, be the consequences what they may.”

“Ah,” she exclaimed, this daughter of a soldier who had given his life for his lord; “you are right, André, my André, so brave, so patriotic, how I adore you!”

How she did, indeed, love him. He felt himself en-

veloped, wrapped round in this love of hers, in the love of this young, charming creature, whose slender arms encircled his neck, whose eyes gazed lovingly into his own. She was not even terrified at the danger menacing him, so proud was she of him and of his courage.

On the morrow, the 31st of May, whilst Pluche and Médard were playing their duets, whilst Puyjoli and his brother were leaning out of the Viscount's apartment, listening to the thundering of the cannon and the roaring of the mob in the streets below, André was there in his place in the Convention, ready to exclaim with Verguin and his colleagues: "Throw us into the gulf if you choose, but save the country."

The Sections in arms paraded the city.

The Quartier Mouffetard, the Section of the Sans-Culottes, had had the Pole, Lazowski, superseded in the command of the National Guard by Henriot. For the three following days, Henriot had caused cannon to be drawn up in the Park of the Tuileries, pointing toward the windows of the hall where the Convention was sitting.

In the Champs Elyseés the cannoniers were casting metal balls to use against the Convention if the Girondins were not delivered up to their opponents of the Mountain. From the 31st of May until the 2nd of June, the Assembly of the French Nation held its sittings menaced by the cannons of Henriot, and received the petitions presented to it on the end of pikestaffs.

On the 30th of May the Girondins were threatened as Thorel had prophesied to his wife. On the 2nd of June they were proscribed.

That was on a Sunday. From Friday to Sunday the fate of the party hung in the balance. Ironical Sunday

of summer, when the many-hued butterflies were fluttering gaily about the pikes and muskets!

This morning, before quitting his wife for the Convention, André held her long and closely pressed to his bosom.

"It is my happiness I leave behind me, dear, but duty calls me and I must go."

"I know."

"Our dear home, how happy we have been here together," he returned, glancing round, perhaps for the last time, on all he was leaving behind him. The books, strewn carelessly upon the table, Clotilde's embroidery, with the needle still sticking in it—a paradise, a nest of love and peace. They had lived solely for each other. Clotilde had no relations, her guardian, Madame de Trémolat, had died some years before, leaving her a snug little fortune with which to endow the husband she adored.

"I should have been perfectly happy," she would say sometimes, "if I had only had——" here, however, she would leave off speaking suddenly, perceiving the shadow her words had caused to creep over her husband's face. A child—was what she so passionately desired and longed for. Now, however, she and André were content that this wish of their hearts had been denied them. "We may, however, see each other again, my husband," she sighed, throwing herself again into his arms. It was her wish to go with him to the Assembly this morning as usual, but this he would not consent to.

"The terrace of the Feuillants to-day is no place for the wife of a Girondin." He exacted from her further a promise not to leave the house.

"I promise you," she replied; "but remember what an agony of suspense I shall surely be in, and send me word as often as possible how it goes with you. Ah, would to God this day were over, and you by my side again!"

"Do not despair," he returned, "a power like that of the Girondins is not crushed in a day.

On this day the Sections, which on the day before and the one preceding that, had not moved, now descended, egged on by the Commune, in force upon the Convention. A hundred persons at most from each Section, less than five hundred in all, totally destroyed and annihilated the party of the Girondins.

As on the two preceding days, the drums rumbled through the streets as André set out on his way to the Hall of the Convention.

"The Girondins will be exterminated this day—the traitors!" Farther on, an old woman mumbled half under her breath, for fear of being overheard:

"This Sunday is St. Pamphile's day. Well, the saint will have a fine fête, it seems."

"A fête-day."

André remembered suddenly that the next day, Monday, would be Saint Clotilde's day, the fête-day of his wife. The day he was always used to celebrate by bringing home to her a great bouquet of roses, in which some trinket would be hidden away.

Clotilde's fête-day!—and he had quite forgotten it.

He was now passing through the Garden of the Revolution, the Garden of the Palais Royal formerly. The Garden was filled to overflowing with soldiers of the National Guard with members from the Sections, with tradespeople talking loudly, and excited, unsexed

women. Passing by a jeweller's shop, André Thorel stopped suddenly, seeing in the window a pair of ear-rings which Clotilde, out walking with him on the evening before, had remarked and admired. Entering the shop, the shopman came to meet him, bowing:

"Let me look at those ear-rings in the shop window, citizen."

The ear-rings purchased, Thorel put them into his waistcoat pocket. A fond superstition made him believe that no evil could befall him with these jewels for Clotilde about his person. The jeweller accompanied him to the door of the shop, opened it for him, and, looking at him earnestly, said in a whisper:

"Take care, Citizen Thorel."

André made a movement of surprise.

"You are on your way to the Convention," continued the man in a whisper, looking around him fearfully, as though fearing to be overheard.

"Yes."

"There will be a storm there, I fear, Citizen. Since daybreak there have been ominous rumours flying about. I wish you success in your struggle against the Jacobins and the Sans-Culottes."

Hardly were the words off his lips when he had shut the door and hurried back to the refuge of his shop again.

"And such cowards as he are our friends and well-wishers," thought André bitterly.

On leaving the garden he felt himself being hurried and pushed along by a great throng of men and women. A roaring, cursing, turbulent crowd. Whole families had encamped on the street-corners. There were women suckling their infants, while children hardly beyond

the toddling age clung to the skirts of their mothers singing the Marseillaise and brandishing sticks as long as themselves over their heads. The members of the Sections were breakfasting in the open streets, before beginning their task of besieging the Palace as they had done the year before on the 10th of August, whilst the royal family was imprisoned there.

"But," thought Thorel, "are they here to defend or to besiege us?" He listened eagerly to the cries of the Sections around him. Some cried, "Down with the Girondins!"—"Long live L'Evêché!" "The arrest of the Two and Twenty!" Others, "Long live the Convention,"—"The Convention one and indivisible as the Republic!" The refrain of the Marseillaise, *Ça ira, Ça ira*, was chanted on every side—the refrain of freedom and patriotism suddenly become a menace to life and liberty. Others, careless sparrows in a tempest, hummed the airs from the popular Visitandines. Devienne's volatile music mingled, oddly enough, with the solemn strains of Rougét de Lisle's high canticle to liberty.

It was a difficult task enough for André to enter and take his seat on one of the benches of the Convention. The hall was surrounded, enveloped fairly by a wall of bristling bayonets.

Before the *Pavilion de l'Horologe* Thorel was stopped by one of the populace.

"No one is allowed to pass here," he said brusquely.

"Friend," returned Thorel, calmly, "I belong inside, I am a deputy of the Convention."

"Your name."

"The Law," replied Thorel, promptly. "And you?"

"The People," returned the fellow boldly; but he

made way; as yet the magic word the Law was of omnipotent power. André asked one more question of the rioter.

“To which section do you belong?”

“Manconseil.” This was that of which Robespierre was the President.

Thorel glanced towards the Champs Élysées. As far as his eye could reach he saw a sea of bayonets, blades and pikes' ends. A whole city was in arms, drawn up around the palace. At the great door of the palace the gunners were seated before their guns, drinking brandy, the lighted matchlocks stuck up straight before them in the ground.

By a vigorous use of his elbows, André succeeded in entering the hall. It was a noisy, clamorous assemblage enough.

Barbaroux was speaking, counselling his colleagues to obey the decree of the day preceding. Languinais succeeded, his speech interrupted continually by the sneers of Chabot and the threats of Legendre.

Thorel listened, pale but resolute, his arms crossed on his chest, having succeeded in gaining his place on the bench.

Below him he could see the hideous face of Marat, the leader of the contest against the party to which he belonged. Outside the hall, Henriot commanded. Inside, Hérault presided. Inside, the tempest of angry voices rose and raged. Outside, the crowd howled and threatened, whilst the butts of the muskets of the soldiers surrounding the building clashed noisily on the pavement.

And now there came an order that none of the members was to quit his place. Soldiers with crossed bayonets

kept the door. The deputies were prisoners in their own hall of convention.

"I shall never see Clotilde again," Thorel told himself.

Then a voice cried:—

"I demand against the Twenty-Two, not merely a decree of accusation, but an order of temporary arrest." It was Couthon speaking. André glanced in the direction where the cripple Couthon was seated on his bench, surrounded by the Thirty, his adherents, who clamoured loudly that the Twenty-Two should be declared under arrest at their own houses.

A proposition was made to the Girondins, in order to reassure them, to choose from among the other deputies, twenty-two hostages.

"We refuse," exclaimed Barbaroux, "we put our lives in the hands of the citizens of Paris."

Evening came. It grew dark in the debating chamber. The lamplighters came in and lighted the lamps mechanically as on other evenings. The heat was intense in the hall. At last the commune consented to raise the interdict by which for some hours it had kept the deputies prisoners on their benches. Thorel left the chamber. He was half-suffocated, hungry and thirsty. He passed out of the Garden of the Tuileries quickly, looking for a place where he could find something to eat and drink.

One of his companions in the Convention, like him a Girondin, put his arm through Thorel's as they turned down one of the streets leading towards St. Roche, and whispered:

"You will come with us, will not you?"

"Where?"

“To Normandy.”

“To fight?”

“Yes. To organize against the Jacobins a force strong enough to crush them. Wimpfen will command it. He is one of us.”

Thorel stopped suddenly, looking his companion straight in the face.

“No,” he answered, “I shall remain here. The Convention, in sacrificing us to our enemies, committed a great crime against us, but we should be committing a greater should we rebel against it. Civil war, when the nation is attacked on all sides by foreigners?—never! What does it matter if our lives are sacrificed to the Republic?”

“It is to save and deliver our country that we should live—adieu.”

“Adieu,” returned André, sadly.

He turned and looked after the retreating form of his companion, strongly tempted to run after him, to stop him before it should be too late. “Civil war—it would be foolish and criminal to plunge the country into it at this moment. But while he hesitated the other had disappeared.

Thorel longed to return to his home in the Rue Vieux Augustins, to see Clotilde, if but for a moment. How anxious she would be. But to return home now would be madness. The decree of arrest against him might have already been enforced. He would wait until night had closed in. Then he would steal up to his wife’s chamber and place the ear-rings he had bought for her in her ears. Half unconsciously André listened to what the groups of persons he passed by in the street were saying. Around the sellers of some

newspapers a circle had formed. He approached them to hear what was going on. In the show-window of a picture-shop were hanging some portraits of the National Representatives, and the light of the candles in the show-window illuminated these pictures. His glance fell upon his own portrait, hanging with those of his colleagues.

“Look, there they are—the Twenty-Two,” said some one.

“How ugly they are!” exclaimed a little hunchback, grinning maliciously.

“Poor creatures,” murmured a woman beside him; “how young they are.”

“Ah, that is a good idea,” exclaimed a fat fishwife, laughing loudly, “to hang them up there in a row together. One can recognise them if one should ever meet them.”

Already André understood the full meaning of that terrible word, “*proscribed*.” He must learn to flee, to conceal, to disguise himself, the Girondin thought sadly. He went away rapidly, looking straight ahead of him, ascending, half unconsciously, the heights of Montmartre.

After leaving the Boulevards, the streets grow narrow and winding. Stretches of ground uncovered by houses, extend along the terraces of the height of the Martyrs. André had now reached one of the suburbs of the city, a suburb with villas and gardens, vineyards and meadows, and here and there some fields in which wheat was sprouting. It was still light on these hills, a luminous twilight promising a clear and starlit night. A joyous crowd of young people were descending the heights of Montmartre on their way to their homes in

the city. A gay, laughing, merry crowd, carrying branches of blooming hawthorn over their shoulders, and nosegays of wild-flowers in their hands.

On nearing the Barrier, Thorel noticed, before passing through, that each was closely interrogated by a soldier in charge there. For a moment the idea came to him to give a false name and flee from Paris. But after all, where could he go? And how could he leave his wife behind him, a prey to anxious doubts and fears?

He turned and descended the hill in the direction of the city. As he walked he could hear the sentinels now and then challenging some passer-by. Some detachments of cavalry rode slowly by. Paris had really the aspect of a city besieged.

Presently he found himself on the spot whence he had started. He searched narrowly among the wine-shops for one insignificant enough to afford him a refuge. A difficult thing to find in that ancient quarter of the town on the first Sunday in June. He succeeded at last in stumbling upon a little *cabaret*. The front of the shop was embellished by a sign where, upon a background of vivid scarlet, some hares were pictured, leaping about in a frying-pan.

Under the arbour a few persons were seated, drinking; peaceful, quiet folk, accompanied by their children. The shop itself, however, seemed to be empty.

The polished tables glittered in the light of a lamp which hung from the ceiling. André entered and took a seat at one of them. A young woman in a white cap ornamented with a bow of tri-coloured ribbon came forward to wait upon him.

“An omelette, with wine and bread, if you please, citizeness.”

“No rabbit? We have some excellent rabbit pie. The citizen by the door yonder has already ordered two portions of it.”

“Very well, as you please, citizeness.”

Until the woman spoke André was not aware that the *cabaret* had another occupant. He looked curiously in the direction indicated by the hostess and saw a man seated about three tables away from him, eating rapidly, his nose held down over his plate.

Thorel examined the man's profile, which was toward him. He had pulled his hat close down over his eyes as though to avoid being recognised.

“Who can he be?” thought André, “an exile or a spy.”

The stranger was about thirty years old, with a pale, closely-shaven face, hair unpowdered. He wore a sombre coat of dark brown.

At the end of a moment's examination, André said to himself:—“It is singular, but if I were not certain Monpazier was away from Paris, I should swear that was he.”

At this moment the man raised his eyes from his plate and examined André in his turn.

“It is certainly Gérard,” said Thorel to himself. “What in the world has brought him here?”

As soon as the woman had left the room to prepare the omelette, the stranger rose quickly and came up to the table where the Girondin was sitting, and, holding out his hand, exclaimed:

“André!”

“Gérard,—it is you, then? I was just telling myself——”

“I recognised you the moment you entered,” replied

Monpazier. "I thought that woman would never leave us alone together. How glad I am to meet you. Do you know, I was on my way to your house?"

"To my house?"

"As soon as it was dark, I intended to knock at your door and beg a night's lodging. I am a fugitive. I have come to fight against your friends and compatriots. Yet, André, I was certain I should not seek for shelter in vain at your hands."

"Shelter, and from me!" and Thorel laughed a hoarse, nervous laugh. "My poor Gérard, I am a denounced, a proscribed fugitive like yourself;—I and all my party with me."

"*Vive Dieu!*" exclaimed the count, "but the Jacobins go rapidly to work. Proscribed—that is to say condemned! What do you intend to do?"

"*Flee*, wait—I cannot tell. In politics the wheel of fortune turns fast, and to-morrow who knows but—but no matter about me." Thorel, gazing anxiously at his friend, continued:

"In the name of all that is sensible, Gérard, why did you come back to Paris?"

"Oh, to get myself killed, most probably. After all, what does it matter?"

André frowned slightly.

"I do not ask whence you come or where you are going, but if you had come to me yesterday for shelter you would have found it."

"The very thing I told my brother this morning."

"That idiot of a Puyjoli; he risks his head by applauding and crying for the plays prohibited by the censors of the Commune."

"But," returned Monpazier, with forced gaiety, "you

and I risk our necks too, if not in the same way. Life is a game, and if one loses one pays his losses with his head."

"My poor Gérard," returned André, "yesterday my house would have been a safe enough shelter for you, to-day it is as unsafe as the streets filled with the soldiers of Henriot."

"And Puyjoli and I were so certain that your house would be safe for me that he has promised to come to-morrow to visit me there."

"Your brother imagines——"

"That I am now at your house. A member of the Convention as you are, we were certain——"

"Silence—the hostess," exclaimed the other, hastily, as the woman returned from the kitchen, a dish with the omelette smoking on it, in one hand. She stopped in astonishment at beholding the two whom she had supposed strangers seated at the same table in familiar and confidential conversation. It was quite probable she might have her suspicions about them.

"Finish your meal as quickly as you can," whispered Monpazier to his companion, "and let us get out of here."

"André swallowed glass after glass of wine with his omelette, finished his meal hastily, paid the score in assignats instead of coin, for fear of exciting the woman's suspicion, and went away, exclaiming loudly,

"An excellent omelette, citizeness. I never tasted a better."

When they were in the street again, Thorel asked under his breath,

"And now, Gérard, where shall you go?"

“I do not know.”

“With me, you need fear nothing. Is not it your idea to go to La Vendée?”

“Yes.”

“Why?”

“Because honour calls me there, and I obey the call.”

“Your duty is to your country—to France.”

“My country is where my friends are, and that is at present in La Vendée.”

“Listen, Gérard; it is folly to fight against Frenchmen, who are your countrymen, whether they be of Paris or Perigord. Take my advice. Do what I shall do. Find a secure hiding-place and lie there *perdu* till the storm blows over. It cannot be that this state of anarchy and misrule will last for ever. There is no safety for you under my roof, but I can send you to the house of a friend of mine where you will be quite safe. I intended to go there myself to-night, but I can find another shelter, and you shall go there in my place. The man is a Republican, a draper—Citizen Vincent Leroux. His shop is in the Rue du Mail, No. 9. He is a staunch friend of mine, and with him you will be quite safe. Tell him frankly who you are, and that I have sent you to him.”

“But suppose Citizen Leroux should refuse to believe that I came from you?”

“Ah, I had not thought of that. Wait;” and Thorel took out of his pocket-book a card on which were engraved his name and title of Deputy, wrote a few words on it, and handed it to his companion with the words:

“Give this card to Citizen Leroux; it will be sufficient to insure you a welcome from him.”

“That—it is a sceptre—that card to-day.” Then, still holding the card lightly between his fingers, he continued: “But, after all, the sceptre is only a bit of paper and the insignia of power but a name scribbled on it. Ah, forgive me, André, I did not mean to be ungrateful, but times have changed with a vengeance when a Monpazier has not in all France a place to lay his proscribed head.”

“Leroux,” continued the Girondin, ignoring the other’s last remark, “will welcome you as hospitably as he would have received me; and in his small, dark shop, you will be as safe as in your lodgings in London.”

“Safely hidden away behind the bales of cloth and silks—be it so!—but you, André, where do you think of going?” he asked anxiously. “You have just told me you intended going thither yourself for refuge, and I cannot consent to deprive you of it unless you can assure me that you have another place to go to as sure and safe as this would have been.

“I know of another place.”

“You are quite sure it is a safe one?”

“Have not I already told you so?”

“Listen to me, André. You must swear to me that you are not putting your own life in jeopardy to save mine; else I will not stir a step from this spot.”

“I am running no danger at all in this case, Gérard; have you any money?”

“Money! My clothes are fairly lined with it,” Monpazier returned, laughing and shrugging his shoulders. “I have a small fortune concealed upon my person, and I would give every louis of it to that person who would insure to my brother and me a place to sleep this night in safety.”

“Do not forget Leroux’s address, Rue du Mail, No. 9.”

“I shall not forget it—Vincent Leroux, draper.”

“And now,” continued Thorel, his voice breaking with emotion, “it is better for us to part. Every moment is precious, and should be used. Hasten, Gérard, to get to Leroux’s house. It is dangerous for you to be seen in my company. The streets are no place for us to wander about this night. But we shall see each other again, if fate wills.” He grasped Monpazier’s hand tightly in his own and exclaimed,

“To the care of a propitious Destiny I commend you, Gérard.”

“And I you to God’s care,” returned the other, solemnly.

With these words they parted.

But where should he go now, the Girondin thought, when he was left alone again. Where indeed? He walked on aimlessly for some distance, when the recollection of his former neighbours, Pluche and his wife, returned to him. Why not go there? They would surely take him in. He went on slowly. Then he remembered suddenly that at this hour the prompter would be at the theatre, and Babet at home alone. Well, what did it matter? He was sure of a welcome from Babet. Nobody would ever think of looking for him in the modest little house in the Rue Hauteville.

He would be obliged, however, to pass through the Rue Vieux Augustins on his way there. He was now in front of his own door. Could he not go in a moment—just one moment—to assure his wife of his safety? He decided that he could.

For a few brief moments he would go in to allay her

fears about him, to hang the ear-rings he had bought for her in her dainty ears.

Just then at the corner of the street a gendarme appeared, coming evidently in the direction of André's very door. He decided, therefore, to creep round to the side and enter through a little gate in the garden wall. He had the key by him, as it happened. He opened the gate and entered.

There were some rather tall trees and a thick cluster of lilac-bushes growing against the wall. As he stood there, he heard footsteps coming hurriedly along the gravelled walk. He drew back still farther into the shadow. A white form glided by him, noiselessly. It was now too dark to distinguish whose figure it was, yet Thorel felt quite sure it was that of his wife. He followed stealthily, and now his eyes growing accustomed to the darkness, he was able to recognize quite certainly that it was Clotilde who had just passed.

Clotilde, alone, at this time of night, here in the garden; what could it be that had brought her there? Impossible. It could not be she. Yet the figure strangely resembled hers. The figure went on up to the pavilion at the other end of the garden, where, during the hot days of summer, Thorel and his wife used to sit—he with his writing, she with her needlework. Its one room had been comfortably furnished with chairs, one or two small tables, a writing-desk and a couch. Still this pavilion was never used by them at night.

The figure, arriving at the door of the pavilion, knocked twice upon the panels of the door. In reply, the door opened silently. A lamp was burning inside, André could no longer doubt that this white-robed

figure was that of his wife, and that she had gone to meet some one there secretly. A great burst of rage filled his heart. His head reeled—he staggered. For one moment he seemed about to fall to the ground. The next, he had recovered himself. He crept up to the door of the pavilion, and put his ear against it. He heard voices speaking within. His wife's and another's—a man's. They were speaking in low tones but he could, as he stood there, catch some words of the conversation.

His wife was speaking earnestly with this man, pleading with him, conjuring him to do something he seemed disinclined to do. She spoke to him in tones of familiar affection, calling him “Gaston.” Gaston,—among all Thorel's and his wife's friends and acquaintances there was none whose Christian name was Gaston. His wife had no brothers, no male relatives at all, as he well knew.

Again, as her voice was raised in the fervour of her supplication, he caught these words, “old memories”—“former love”—“our past.” This word, the “past,” was repeated again and again by her.

So she had had, then, a “past” of which he knew nothing? In a wild burst of ungovernable anger and fierce jealousy, André, hardly conscious of what he was doing, shook the door violently. The light was suddenly extinguished. The voices left off speaking. Placing his shoulder against the door, André burst it in. He groped about in the darkness with outstretched arms, seeking to grasp something. He stumbled over some overturned pieces of furniture, but the pavilion was untenanted. The occupants of it had fled away in the darkness.

"They cannot be far off," he muttered, between his clenched teeth. "I shall have them yet."

The pavilion, he knew, was built at the entrance of a grotto. From this grotto, an underground passage led into the street, the Rue Plâtrière.

"Ah, I had forgotten that," he exclaimed to himself, and then the bitter, cruel thought came to him that Clotilde had never reminded him of this passage as a way of flight, should he be in danger, preferring, it was evident, to keep it for the use of another. Well, he would follow them—he would pursue them to the street where he would fall upon this man, the betrayer of his wife, with his bare fists, for he was not armed. He would administer to the seducer the punishment which he merited.

Here, however, he heard some one call his name in a whisper:

"Citizen Thorel."

Turning quickly, he beheld a man standing in the aperture of the doorway.

"Who is there?"

"Panazol, your neighbour."

Panazol was the name of a worthy man, a cobbler, who occupied a little shop next Thorel's house on the Rue Vieux Augustins.

"I saw you enter by the alley into the garden just now, citizen. The soldiers are here, just on your heels. They are at present in your apartment, searching for you. But they will soon have done and come here to seek you. You have just time to escape them, but hurry—hurry and be off directly."

To go away now, André felt would be quite impossible. Moreover, how was it that the shoemaker had

known that he was here in the pavilion? In answer to this question, the man replied quickly;—

“Because I saw Citizeness Thorel enter here only a short time ago.”

“Alone?”

“Alone.”

André was now more bewildered than ever. He was about to question the shoemaker further, when the latter exclaimed impatiently :

“Citizen, there is no time to be lost in parleying. Hurry, hurry ; it seems to me as if there were already persons in the garden. Come with me at once. I have a rope-ladder by me with which you can climb the wall and reach the street in safety. From the street to my shop is but a step. There is no time to lose.”

Seizing André by the arm, he drew him rapidly away. There was indeed no time to be lost. Figures were to be seen passing by the windows of the Thorels' apartment, now brilliantly lighted. A door leading out into the garden was opened noisily and heavy footsteps came running in the direction of the pavilion. By this time they were at the other end of the garden. The shoemaker fastened the ladder to the wall, and as soon as André had ascended it and dropped over into the street, he followed quickly, leaving the ladder dangling. “They will not think of looking here to-night. When they find the ladder in the morning you will be out of their reach. Come into the shop now for a time.”

André let the man lead him whither he would. When they were in the dark shop, for Panazol **did** not dare to make a light for fear of discovery, the shoemaker inquired anxiously :

“And now, do you know of any place where you will be safe? I know of a laundry at the side of Mont-rouge.”

“Thank you, thank you,” exclaimed André, much moved, “but I have a friend at whose house I shall be safe. Thank you.”

“Why thank me,” returned the man, wonderingly, “Between neighbours—but now you must stir your stumps, and when I see Citizeness Thorel to-morrow, I can tell her you are safe.”

“Safe,” thought Thorel, bitterly, as he went out into the street.

A whirlwind of confused thoughts, of wild plans, was raging in his breast as he went mechanically on his way. To what an ironical turn of destiny did he owe it that this poor neighbour of his, a man who was almost unknown to him, should save his life, while his wife, whom he trusted and loved, should choose this night of all others to betray him.

“Why, after all, should I seek to escape? Why not return and deliver myself up to my pursuers?” he thought moodily, as he strode along. “There is no more happiness left for me in this world. I might far better be dead.”

The dreams and illusions of his life had fled. Liberty, at whose shrine he had worshipped, had deceived and abandoned him. The wife he loved and cherished had betrayed him. Suddenly he recollected the little box stowed away in his waistcoat pocket, containing the jewels he had bought for her that very day, for her fête-day on the morrow. Fool that he was—confiding, trusting husband.

“Idiot,” he muttered, between his clenched teeth,

CHAPTER VI.

VINCENT LEROUX.

WHEN Gérard de Monpazier parted from his friend Thorel, he deliberated if it would not be better to return for a moment to his brother's lodgings in the Rue de la Loi and leave word with Migrayon of his change of plans and the address of Vincent Leroux, that Gaston might visit him there and not at Thorel's as they had determined upon.

On second thoughts, however, he decided it would be too dangerous. After all, it was quite improbable that Puyjoli would in any case venture to come either to Thorel's or the draper's to seek him. It was also quite improbable that his brother would return to his apartment for some time to come. It certainly would be in the highest degree dangerous for him to attempt it. "Then forward!" exclaimed Monpazier to himself, "to this Jacobin draper's shop. By the light of a street-lamp one could read the legend on a huge sign—" Vincent Leroux, cloths from Sedan, silks from Lyons."

Monpazier surveyed the premises carefully before demanding admittance. If there should be a porter in his box at the entrance door? a porter who would question him closely before admitting him. But there was no porter visible. The door was closed and the shutters drawn, but a streak of light escaping from be-

low the door showed that the shop was not untenanted. Somebody was at work behind the door, a shopman probably. Would it be advisable to knock and demand admittance? After a moment's hesitancy, Gérard decided that there was nothing else left for him to do. Behind those barred shutters would there be a welcome, or a denunciation? What sort of a face would it be which would appear presently in the doorway, a kind or a menacing one?

Gérard, of course, was unaware that the shopman did not sleep in the shop. It was Leroux himself who would presently admit him, Leroux, bending over his ledgers with face purple with excitement and haggard, blood-shot eyes, haunted always by the phantom of approaching bankruptcy. Were it not for Germaine, the unhappy man would have long since put an end to his life, which had become a torture, an unending, unescapable torture. But if he were to die now, he would leave her poor, alone, friendless, in this great city of Paris—the prey of a young libertine like Puyjoli, probably.

On this very evening, Germaine had descended from the apartment above into the shop to bring him his coffee. She had entreated him to leave his accounts and go with her upstairs, as she was lonely without him. He had refused, however, and she had remained in the shop with him.

As they sat there, Leroux, raising his face from his book and listening attentively, exclaimed suddenly:—

“There is somebody knocking at the shop-door.”

“It is only the whirring of the clock about to strike, father,” she answered gently.

“No, no,” he returned impatiently, “it is some one knocking,” and with the superstition usual to unhappy

people, with whom any unexpected event may mean a change, a pleasant change, Leroux felt a ray of hope awaken in his heart, but just now so full of sad forebodings. He got up quickly from his stool and going to the door, undid the bolt and threw it wide open.

By the light of the lamp which Germaine, who had followed him, held in her hand, the figure of a man, young and good-looking, was discernible.

“You are Monsieur Vincent Leroux?” inquired the new-comer, as he stepped across the threshold.

“That is my name,” was the answer.

The man turned, and, closing the door behind him carefully, said,

“I should like a shelter for the night.”

“From me?”

“I have been sent here to you by a member of the National Convention, André Thorel.

“You are welcome,” returned the other. “The name of Thorel is a sufficient recommendation.” Then, taking the lamp from his daughter’s hand, he held it close to the stranger’s face, examining it attentively.

“Thorel,” continued the other, taking a card from his waistcoat pocket, “sends this card as my credentials,” as if divining the suspicions which his first words must have excited in Leroux’s breast.

“He and his colleagues, Girondins, were denounced by the Mountain in the Convention to-day. They were condemned to arrest at their own homes. To escape arrest, Thorel was coming to you himself, but, meeting me, an old friend, and like him, a proscribed fugitive, he sent me in his stead, going himself to seek a shelter elsewhere.”

“Thorel accused in the Convention, Thorel decreed

under arrest at his own house ! ” exclaimed the draper, doubting if he had heard aright.

“ It is only too true. He, the Republican, is now in as great peril of his life as I, the Royalist.”

“ So you are a Royalist,” growled the draper, with a sudden frown, “ and yet a friend of Thorel’s ? ”

“ We have been friends from childhood. We were students at the same college.”

“ A Royalist, a Royalist,” Vincent Leroux continued to mutter through his clenched teeth, and with hard looks at the new-comer.

But here Germaine interposed, saying gently :

“ It is some one in misfortune, father ; one, too, whom Citizen Thorel has sent to us.”

Leroux gave a little bitter laugh. Was the stranger, he thought, any more unfortunate than he, and yet he came to be rescued ? But, with a brusque gesture, which, however, was intended to be courteous, he pointed to a chair, saying :

“ You are quite welcome, Citizen, to my house.”

“ I hardly know how to thank you, Citizen, for the service you have done me to-night—nor you either, Mademoiselle,” he added, bowing low to her, as he would in former days have bent before some lady of the court at Versailles. “ You, who have, I think, been the means of inducing your father to hold out the hand of welcome to a fugitive and a stranger.” These words were spoken in the refined tones and the exquisite French which the proscribed nobleman could unfortunately not disguise even to have saved his handsome head from Sanson’s axe. He smiled as he spoke, glancing at her with eyes full of admiration and gratitude.

Germaine, as she listened, was reminded involuntarily

by his words and tone of Puyjoli—Puyjoli, whom she loved, and whom, in all probability, she should never see again.

“Have you dined?” she asked, imagining in her innocence that a fugitive was likely to be on the verge of starvation.

“I dined some hours ago, in a little out-of-the-way *cabaret*, with Thorel.”

Leroux still kept his scowling eyes fixed on this cidevant bandying compliments and fine phrases with his daughter. What in the world did Thorel mean by sending such an one to him? But, as he had sent him, he, Leroux, must put up with his presence at least for a night, he supposed. And to the draper, harassed, menaced by ruin, it seemed a small thing that the life of an idler, a do-nothing like this ex-noble, should be in danger. What good was his life to anybody, he thought scornfully.

He, this aristocrat, he heard him telling Germaine, had risked his life to come to Paris to see his brother. Fine useful lives, both of them—his and his brother’s! And to be obliged to fight, to die even, for one’s faith and friends; was that a fate to be deplored? Vincent asked himself, scornfully. How gladly he would have changed places with him, the draper thought, enviously.

It was Germaine who noticed presently how weary, how broken with fatigue, their guest was, though he strove to hide his weariness from them. Going up to her father, she inquired in a low tone where he intended the stranger to sleep.

“Here in the shop. The bed which the shopman sometimes occupies is a comfortable one, and he will be

safer here than in the rooms overhead. No one would think of searching for him here. I shall be working here for some hours still, and can alarm you if there should be any danger."

"A bed anywhere," returned Monpazier, rising from his chair as he spoke, "and of any kind, will be acceptable to me to-night. I think I could sleep sweetly on a bare rock." Then, turning to Germaine, he added in those tones of mingled sweetness and sadness, which awakened in her recollections at once so sweet and bitter, "when I was happy and fortunate, when I was a child, Mademoiselle, my nurse used to tell me of beautiful and kind fairies which I implicitly believed in then, and now I return again to my childish beliefs, for, more fortunate than when I was a child, I have to-night beheld a kind and beneficent fairy."

This compliment, high-flown, even a little ridiculous perhaps, did not sound so to the blushing recipient of it.

Monpazier—an hour ago she had never heard the name; now it seemed to her as if she and the bearer of it had known each other all their lives.

"Monsieur de Monpazier," she repeated to herself as she climbed the narrow, dark, winding staircase leading from the shop to the apartment above. "If I had ever heard Monsieur de Puyjoli speak of a brother, I should certainly think this gentleman were he, his elder brother. The resemblance too, between them, is striking. They must be related. I shall ask Monsieur de Monpazier, when I see him to-morrow, if he does not know Monsieur de Puyjoli. How strange it would be to find out that Monsieur de Puyjoli was the brother he had risked his life to see." She entered her cham-

ber and closed her door after her. The next moment she had forgotten the existence of both Monpazier and Puyjoli, so full of anxiety was her heart for her father, driven to desperation at the approach of ruin at once so terrible and so undeserved.

CHAPTER VII.

PUYJOLI'S SECOND OF JUNE.

DURING those days of riot and tumult which proved so disastrous to the fate of the Girondins in the National Convention, Puyjoli wandered about the streets of Paris, a prey to strange and conflicting emotions.

His curiosity was awakened by the strange scenes around him, while to curiosity was added anger and disgust at the disorder which he witnessed on every side. He joined himself to the groups at the street corners and listened to the talk of the frequenters of the *cabarets* and gardens.

He was as much entertained by the spectacle furnished him by a Parisian mob as he had formerly been at the theatres. He gazed searchingly at the deputies from the Sections as they marched by on their way to the Convention.

This handsome, gallant young nobleman would, moreover, gladly have exchanged his tall, slender figure, his hair of gold and his complexion of milk and roses, for the brawny figures and brown, hairy visages of one of these stalwart citizens.

"Mademoiselle de Louverchal would probably not have said 'No,'" he sighed, "if I had been fortunate enough to look like one of those sturdy rascals."

Then he remembered suddenly that the Marquis and his daughter would not even in the recesses of

their hôtel in the Rue Mirabeau, be able to shut out the booming of the cannon, the tolling of La Générale, and the chanting of La Marseillaise in the streets outside.

They would be very much frightened, and Puyjoli's first thought was to go to them and endeavour to reassure them. He had obeyed Migrayon's entreaties not to return to his lodgings. There were several other asylums, however, of which he had the choice.

Sophie Clerval passed for a good patriot, and Sophie would have received him with open arms. He decided however, to reserve this place of refuge for the last, beautiful as the arms held out to welcome him undeniably were.

But, though not at all disquieted as to his own fate, he was devoured with anxiety about his brother's. Why in the world had Monpazier quitted his refuge in London just at this moment when his presence in France was useless to his party and highly dangerous to himself?

"My poor brother," he murmured under his breath, with an involuntary shudder, as the thought occurred to him suddenly that if by any chance Monpazier should be arrested, his fate would be no doubtful one.

He endeavoured to comfort himself, however, with the thought that Gérard would have as a protector and friend, a member of the National Convention. He found relief, too, in the thought that he should be able now to see his brother. Clotilde had given him the address of her house. The knowledge that in this great, unquiet city of Paris, Gérard would be able to find a corner to lay his proscribed head and fugitive body was a blissful one to his brother.

"Protected by one of our rulers and law-givers, he is certainly safe,"—he told himself.

So thinking, Puyjoli found himself at the door of the Marquis's hôtel. It was only after repeated knockings that the door was opened slightly, and a trembling voice demanded from behind it:

"Who is there?"

"Viscount Puyjoli," returned the visitor; the porter Bonnemain from inside the door turned pale with terror at hearing it.

"Ah, it is you, *Citizen* Puyjoli. Enter." And the portal was opened wide enough to allow Puyjoli to pass through it. At the sight of Bonnemain's livid, convulsed countenance, Puyjoli burst out laughing.

"Upon my word, Bonnemain, your face is as livid as that of a corpse."

The porter's face lengthened visibly at this ominous word.

"Your face is as green as a drowned man's."

Strange to say, this comparison of Puyjoli's restored the porter's courage a little. A drowned corpse is not a headless one.

"My face is green, is it, Monsieur le Vicomte? Ah, you may well laugh at mine when yours remains always as fresh as a rose, as rosy as a ripe apple."

It was now Puyjoli's turn to be annoyed. He frowned slightly as he answered,

"Ah, Bonnemain, spare me, I beg of you, your odious comparisons. It is quite as annoying for a man to have his face compared to a flower as to a fruit. Besides, your manner of speech is old-fashioned and provincial, my Bonnemain; you should change it for the speech current of the Republicans here about you. You will

draw down suspicions upon your head if you do not. Roses and lilies are emblems of royalty, of which a citizen of France should know nothing. Monsieur le Marquis, is he to be seen, do you know?"

"Monsieur le Marquis sees nobody, you know well, Monsieur le Vicomte."

"But I—I am somebody, Bonnemain, and he will see me, I know. Announce me, if you please, to the Marquis and Mademoiselle de Louverchal."

Bonnemain had shown the Viscount, after they had crossed the court-yard, into a little drawing-room on the ground floor. There, upon seating himself, he found himself confronted by the charming pastel portrait of Bertha, which he had first seen at Perigueux.

Puyjoli, still a victim to sudden and sporadic attacks of his former timidity, felt his heart beat violently at the sight of this counter-presentment of his lady-love, as it had done on the first time of his seeing it. He seemed to hear ringing in his ears again, the bright clear laughter of the young girl, which had accompanied her refusal on that day to marry him. And as he looked again, it almost seemed to him that, underneath the smiles, he could detect a faint expression of melancholy on the pictured face before him. How many changes there had been in him and in everything about him since that day when he, a boy at Perigueux, had gone as wooer to this girl.

He was quite satisfied now that Bertha had not accepted him then. It was right and meet that the man she deigned to love should put it to the touch to gain or lose his all to win her. Some day he would win her. "To-day, or ten years from now. At Paris or at Peking, she shall yet be mine."

Just here the Marquis, clad in the same flowered dressing-gown he had worn on that eventful morning at Perigord, attended by Bonnemain, as pale as Bonnemain, as terrified as Bonnemain, came into the room.

"Ah, ah," the worthy nobleman greeted his visitor, vainly endeavouring to appear at ease. "What has happened? What new misfortune have you come to an-an-announce to me?"

"I came simply to re-assure you."

"To re-assure me?"

"Yes. I know you dislike noise and clamour, and on hearing the beating of the drums and that confounded alarm-bell, I came to keep you company, and to tell you this tumult and uproar, unlike those we have been favoured with lately, need not concern us. The wolves have begun to rend one another."

The Marquis gazed with stupefaction at the fresh, smiling face of his visitor.

"Do you know," he exclaimed abruptly, "that I admire you immensely, my dear Viscount?"

"Admire me! What in the world do you find to admire in me, I should like to know?"

"Because you are simply superb in your imperturbability. Nothing troubles you. You live in Paris in a time of Revolution as happy and careless as a fish in water."

"It amuses me," replied Puyjoli, "and it is a means of distraction to me, who would otherwise find the time dull whilst waiting for Mademoiselle de Louverchal to make up her mind to marry me."

The Marquis shook his head despairingly.

"Oh, do not speak of her any more, Viscount. I am in despair about her. I have always desired the mar-

riage, as you know. I have been a sincere partizan of yours. But Bertha—one can do nothing with her, and remembering (not to speak harshly) what her mother's, my late wife's disposition was, I am not, I confess, surprised at the obstinacy of my daughter. When I think that if Bertha had married you years ago, as any sensible girl would have been glad to do, we should now all of us be in safety, miles away from this fiery furnace of a Paris, I am out of all patience with the obstinate, silly girl."

Gaston laughed.

"I assure you, my dear Marquis, that you quite calumniate Paris. Paris is decidedly interesting nowadays. You should go out——"

"Go out!" screamed Monsieur de Louverchal, panic-stricken at the idea.

"Go to the theatres, to the opera. There is no place so bewitching, so intoxicating in its charm as Paris. One would risk one's life, Marquis, to kiss the hand of a mistress one adored. And Paris, Marquis, is dear to me as the woman I love. I adore Paris."

"To risk one's life for a woman is all very well, but to imperil one's head for a town—that is nonsense."

"For a city in which lives the loveliest, the dearest of her sex," returned Puyjoli, with a gesture toward Bertha's portrait.

"Then you are still as much in love with——"

"With Paris."

"The devil take Paris. You know very well that I am talking of my daughter."

"Once is always," returned Puyjoli, whose gay voice had grown suddenly serious.

"But if such is the case, my dear Viscount, why

do you advertise so boldly your connection with an actress?"

"With an actress—where did you hear that?"

The Marquis hesitated. He looked carefully around to see if Bonnemain were anywhere within hearing, but the porter had vanished. He had gone, probably, to announce the Viscount's visit to his young mistress.

"You understand," continued M. de Louverchal, satisfied that no one was within hearing, "that I am not finding any fault with you. If you choose to take under your protection one of these ladies of the stage, that is entirely your own affair; but since the new régime in Paris, the newspapers busy themselves with a gentleman's private affairs in a devilishly unpleasant manner. These damned newspapers——"

"I never read them," Puyjoli interrupted him.

"There you are wrong, my dear young friend. I have them bought for me and read them regularly. They make my blood run cold when I read them, but they keep me posted in what is going on around us. And in one of these newspapers I read it, and so did my daughter. There was a paragraph asserting that you were the favourite and fortunate lover of Sophie Clerval, one of the actresses of the Théâtre de la Nation."

"Clerval—the name was given in full, then?"

"It was, indeed."

"When did you see this?"

"Only a day or two ago. Bertha saw it, too, and I fancy was annoyed at it, though she said nothing."

"Do you think so indeed?" inquired Puyjoli eagerly.

"She was extremely annoyed at it. But you really seem pleased to hear it."

"I am indeed."

"Why?"

"Because it shows me that Mademoiselle de Louverchal is no longer indifferent to me, and anger is easier for a lover to endure than indifference. What did the newspapers have to say about my connection with Sophie?"

"She was reproached by the paragrapher, an ardent Jacobin, I should imagine, for her liaison with a ci-devant. Your name, too, was printed out at length. It appears that your fair friend has just had the right of citizenship conferred upon her by the Commune."

"Ah, now I understand why I have been denounced before that honourable body."

"Then you have been denounced before the Commune?"

"Certainly; and in consequence of this denunciation I shall not, for some time at least, venture to return to my apartment."

The face of the Marquis grew livid with fear at these words of his visitor.

"Denounced," he muttered faintly.

"Indeed, my dear Marquis, I am only surprised that our friends the Jacobins have been so slow about it."

"You are mad."

"No, only bored. But, after all, that is almost the same thing, for a man who is bored is really capable of as great an act of folly as one who is beside himself. There is one thing he is incapable of, that of endangering the safety or destroying the peace of mind of his friends. And that is the reason I have come here to tell you that my visits, after to-day, must for a time, at least, cease altogether."

The unhappy Marquis was really put in a sad dilemma by these words of the Viscount's. Honour whispered to him that he should at once offer his house place of refuge to his friend, but fear paralyzed as a his tongue and kept him mute.

The Viscount perceived the embarrassment of the other. He smiled slightly, and was beginning to say something to reassure his unhappy friend, when the door opened and Bertha, fair, fresh, smiling, entered the room. In a simple gown of flowered chintz, her hair unpowdered and bound with blue ribbons, she looked a very shepherdess of Trianon. She held out a little hand in welcome to Puyjoli. He bowed low over it, pressing it to his lips.

"You are a rare visitor to us, Viscount," she said, with a charming little *muoe*.

"Indeed, Mademoiselle; but whose fault is it? Had I my way, I should never be separated from you."

"To be always with us. Ah, I fear you would find our society very dull, and in a short time seek an excuse to fly to those friends more congenial to you."

He could not help understanding in her words an allusion to Sophie Clerval, though, to do Bertha justice, she had no idea that he would do so. The Marquis, however, was ill at ease, and reproached himself for having spoken to Puyjoli about the gossip in the newspaper concerning him and the actress. How reckless, too, was Bertha to allude to the rarity of Puyjoli's visits. A man proscribed and a fugitive should have known better than to have come at all, imperilling their lives for an idle whim.

Puyjoli, quick-witted enough to divine the Marquis's

disquietude, hastened to relieve it by saying a few words of farewell.

His heart beat high with hope on perceiving that Bertha's face paled perceptibly as he said :

"It will probably be a long time before I shall again have the pleasure of seeing you." Yes, there was no doubt of it ; the lovely face, usually so mischievous and mutinous, grew pale and wan at the words.

"I hope, Viscount," the marquis said falteringly, "I—hope—you—will—manage—to let us know—how—things—go with you?"

"I shall always manage to know how it fares with you. As for me, who cares really what becomes of me?"

"You calumniate your friends," exclaimed Bertha, hastily, and laying a stress on the last word, "when you accuse them of heartlessness or indifference toward you."

"Ah, Mademoiselle, you make me very happy by telling me that I have friends who care for me. As for me, I confess I should be only too happy if I could hope that one of these days some Republican bullet or sword-thrust in my face would render it less displeasing in your bright eyes. If some patriot should cut off my nose, now, you would not refuse me again, would you?"

He bowed low to Bertha, whose pallor had given way to blushes as he continued to speak, held out his hand to the Marquis, and quitted the room.

Bonnemain conducted him through the court-yard, evidently not a little relieved to see the last of him.

Puyjoli, in thinking it over, was not ill-satisfied with his interview with Bertha that day. It was evident that she was beginning to care for him. "Ah, woman,

woman," thought Puyjoli, when he found himself in the street once more. "Figaro is right when he declares that it is only by wounding your vanity that a man can gain the mastery over you. Is she beginning to feel jealous of my devotion to Sophie? Ah, if she did but know that I would not give one hair of her dear head for all Sophie's devotion! But what do the newspapers mean by bandying my name about in their pages—I, who never look at them?"

He now determined to go and pay a visit to Sophie. The hôtel she occupied in the Place Vendôme, Section des Piques was not far off. He arrived there to find Pluche on the door-steps before him.

"Ah, Citizen Pluche, I have caught you. You, too, come to pay court to this divinity who makes us all bow the knee to her."

Nicholas smiled, but in a half-hearted way; he was pale and seemed anxious.

"I have come to bring Citizeness Clerval the rôle for which she is cast in the new play," he answered, gravely.

"Pray do not seek to excuse your coming here, Pluche, I am no jealous lover, as you have probably discovered by this time. We two have always been good friends, eh?"

"Ah, Monsieur—Citizen—Viscount, is there any need for your asking a question like that?"

"And you still have a corner in your house where you will stow away a good-for-nothing aristocrat if the danger should grow too threatening for him, eh?"

"Always. Our roof will be honoured by your presence if you deign to seek its shelter, and Babet, I assure you, is a capital cook."

Puyjoli grasped thankfully the hand of this brave little man, so really, simply heroic, without being in the least conscious of his heroism.

"The day when Sophie Clerval closes her door against me, I shall come to you. Remember that, Citizen Pluche."

"You will be welcome, Cit—, Monsieur le—," and Pluche seemed to be seeking vainly for a title, something that should be a happy compromise between the proscribed title and the word citizen, which he knew must be odious in Puyjoli's ears.

"You have not hit it, Pluche," exclaimed Puyjoli, laughingly. "The best title you can give me is that of friend. But now a truce to parleying. Let us ascend to Citizen Clerval's apartment."

"After you, Mons—, Citizen."

"*Friend, friend,*" Puyjoli interrupted him impatiently.

Pluche, who had left Médard and his flute waiting for him at home, his errand finished, went off speedily, leaving Puyjoli and the actress alone together.

"He is a brave man, a hero—Citizen Pluche," exclaimed Puyjoli, as he stood at the window, gazing after the retreating form of the prompter. "The spirit of an ancient Roman lingers in that small, fat body of his. He has offered to take me to his house and hide me there when your friends, the Jacobins, leave me without a hole to lay my proscribed head in. And he is quite unconcerned that, by doing so, he risks his own life, in all probability."

"But really, Gaston, you are too foolhardy," exclaimed Sophie, with her eyes full of love, gazing at his beautiful countenance. "It is the act of a madman.

to behave as you have been doing. You cannot expect to have escaped denunciation before the Tribunal. You have made yourself notorious by your conduct at the theatre, and you must take the consequences."

"Yes, the newspapers have made me a subject of their comments, and you, too, Mademoiselle, if you please. You have been reproached by them for taking a *ci-devant* for your lover. I fear I have endangered your peace and comfort too, Sophie, forgive me, dear."

She threw herself down on her knees before him, and, taking in her white hands his, as white as her own, and laying her beautiful head on his shoulder, answered:

"What does it matter? As if you could compromise *me!* I would throw myself into the fire to save you. I would cast my reputation to the four winds of heaven for your sake. Unhappily, however, it was all torn and rent in pieces before I ever set eyes on you. Foolish boy, *you* compromise *me!*"

"As a patriot, as a Republican."

"Bah, my patriotism, my love for my country, is a small thing compared with my love for you. But it is true you are so foolhardy, you exasperate me so that, if it were possible, I should have cast you off long ago, to throw myself into the arms——"

"Of Danton, of Robespierre, probably."

"Well, after all, they are in the right. It was time for France to break the chains with which you aristocrats had bound her hand and foot. Of those rights and privileges you assumed, you nobles, you have been rightfully despoiled."

"On the tenth of August last, a charming day it was too, I am not likely to forget it—you need not re-

mind me of it, Sophie. When you talk as you are doing, you make me think you have been taking some lessons of Citizeness Theraigu, and I prefer you as you are, my dear."

"Oh," she exclaimed, throwing herself into his arms, "I did not mean one word of what I have just been saying. In all the world there is no one else I care for but you. You have bewitched me with your beauty, I think, Gaston."

He untwined her arms with a gesture of distaste. She was not too slow to remark that by her last words she had displeased him.

"I know you despise your beauty, Gaston, and care nothing for your life. Why, tell me?"

He gave her no answer, and, after a pause she went on seriously:

"I am sorry your imprudence has caused you to be proscribed by the Commune. And then, too, the newspapers having coupled our names together renders it impossible for me to hide you here. In spite of my reputation as a good patriot, here would be the first place they would come to search for you, Gaston."

"But it is extremely pleasant for me to be here, and you mean to put me out at the door!" he exclaimed smiling. He had thrown himself down on a couch, and was stretched at full length on it with his hands above his head. He looked down silently at the girl who was kneeling on the floor beside him.

"Of what are you thinking?" she asked wonderingly, after a silence of some moments.

"Oh, of nothing—of you."

"How complimentary!" she retorted. "But as you have spoken the truth, I must forgive you, I suppose,"

she added, rising to her feet as she spoke. "If you are in the mood to do me a favour, hear me recite my rôle. Here is the manuscript Pluche has just brought. See, he has marked all those parts which I have to learn." She held out the roll of paper toward him, saying,

"You must not forget to applaud me now and then, to encourage me, you know."

"I shall not. Let me see, where is it you begin?"

Sophie, planting herself directly in front of him, began declaiming fluently,

"Ah, too charming Valcour, the sight of you has awakened again in me all those emotions so fatal to my peace.' Do not look at me, you put me out. What eyes you have! Bright as stars! Drop your lids and let me go on with the speech. 'The groves know of my sighs, my tears. On the barks of these trees I have engraved these words—'Valcour is my heart's choice, and with Valcour's fate——'"

"It is 'destiny' here," interrupted Gaston.

"What?"

"It is not 'fate,' it is 'destiny.' The writer probably thinks it a more '*noble*' word."

"Noble!" she exclaimed saucily, "There is no such word in the dictionaries now-a-days. The Republicans have expunged it, most *noble* Viscount. Kiss me. You prompt very well. I like you better even than Pluche. So there is a career left open to you, that of prompter, my dear *ci-devant*. But I must go on with my work."

"What joy, what bliss, my Valcour——' Ah, bah, I have had enough of Valcour," and, taking the manuscript from Puyjoli's hand, she cast it contemptuously on a table. "How cold, how stilted are these mimic

loves of the theatre, compared to a living, burning, passionate love like ours, Gaston."

He made no answer. It was not in his heart to tell her that, though she loved him, his love was all given to a woman who had scorned, rejected and laughed at him.

This was the way in which Puyjoli passed that memorable Sunday which saw the downfall of the Girondins. At the approach of evening he felt an irresistible desire to see his brother once more. "I cannot rest," he told himself, "until I know he is in safety. An émigré! That is one for whom death lurks at every street-corner here in Paris. What on earth possessed him to come here! He should have rather gone straight on to La Vendée. Let me see, Citizen Thorel lives in the Rue Vieux Augustins. *En avant* for Citizen Thorel's, then!"

CHAPTER VIII.

GOLD.

AFTER Germaine had left the shop, Vincent Leroux pointed out to Monpazier the recess where the shopman's bed was hidden. Germaine had put fresh linen on it, which gave the couch, small and narrow though it was, a delicious appearance in the eyes of the way-worn and wearied fugitive.

"I am afraid you will be very uncomfortable," Leroux said mechanically, hardly knowing what he said.

"I, a soldier—oh, I shall sleep the sleep of a child. Ah, my dear host, how shall I ever repay you for your kindness toward me?"

"You owe me no thanks," returned the draper, "I have done what I did for Citizen Thorel's sake, not yours."

Monpazier made no answer. "You permit me?" he said presently, beginning to take off his coat. He undressed himself, heaving sighs of satisfaction. The sighs of a man completely broken by fatigue.

"I only ask one night's sleep, one good night's sleep; I have not had one now for a week. After that——" he stopped suddenly, having let his belt drop on the floor of the shop. The clank of metal was plainly audible. Some rolls of gold which had fallen out of the

belt had come undone, and some pieces rolled out upon the floor.

“How awkward of me,” he exclaimed, annoyed.

At the sound of the metal, Vincent, who had turned his back on Monpazier, turned round suddenly, and staring at his guest with bloodshot eyes, exclaimed involuntarily,

“Gold, you have gold about you!”

Monpazier, who had knelt down on the floor and was picking up the straying gold pieces, answered laughingly:

“Yes, I have all the fortune here that remains to me. I would have handed it over to you to keep for me, Citizen Leroux, but, living as I do, not knowing where I may lay my head to-morrow, it is well to keep my money about me. Gold—it may be my salvation in times like these. I am like that sage of old, you know, *Omina mecum portn!*”

Of all these words which the count had been saying, the draper had only remarked one, “my fortune.” So this man carried about with him a fortune!

This gold, which fell upon the floor of the shop, the master of which was menaced by ruin, was the property of this stranger, who, in these times of death and misery, gaily traversed the city, carrying a fortune hidden about his person. Imprudent? He was a madman, this Monpazier!

The draper had intended to return once more to his desk and his ledger. Now he dared no longer remain in the same room with the stranger.

“Good-night,” he said roughly, and, taking a lamp in his hand, he ascended the stairs to his apartment.

He walked with his eyes fixed before him, seeing

always the yellow shimmer of the gold. As he went past his daughter's chamber, he stopped outside the door and called, softly,

"Germaine!"

"Father!"

"You are not yet in bed, my child?" he inquired with anxious tenderness.

"I have been reading." She opened her door slightly, her beautiful face peeped out from the aperture. She smiled slightly as her father, bending down, imprinted a kiss on her forehead.

"Go to bed and to sleep, I beg of you."

"But you, father, will not you go to bed too? It is late," she added anxiously. "You will kill yourself sitting over those dreary books night after night. Poor father!"

"You are right, I am going to bed. I came up-stairs to do so. Good-night."

"Good-night, dear father."

He entered his own chamber. His throat felt parched and hot with burning, raging fever. Going to the dining-room, he looked about on the buffet for something to quench his thirst. The blood rushed to his head, there was a ringing noise in his ears—a noise like the clanking of falling gold pieces on a brick floor. A fortune—a fortune, the words seemed to be whispered all around him. "A fortune," he muttered between his teeth, the blood rushing to his eyeballs.

Gérard de Monpazier meanwhile had stretched himself out luxuriously on his hard, narrow bed. A delicious sense of rest, of peace, of safety, filled his heart and brain. He lay in a state between sleep and waking, recalling the incidents of the day just past—his

visit to his brother—his meeting with his friend—his coming to the draper's shop. Was Thorel in a place of safety, he wondered. His thoughts, wandering hither and thither, returned again to his surroundings.

This man Leroux, what a rough, uncompromising Jacobin he was. What a grudging hospitality—this of his—but his daughter—how fair, how lovely, how kind. Murmuring the name Germaine under his breath, he smiled dreamily. How well the name suited her grave, pensive beauty. Here, throwing up his hand above his head, his fingers touched the pistol lying on his pillow. And so, with his hand clutching the pistol, the fugitive dropped off into a heavy, dreamless sleep.

Above, Leroux paced restlessly up and down the dining-room. "It is extraordinary, how thirsty I am," he said, taking down a decanter of brandy from the buffet, pouring out and gulping down a glassful. The fiery liquid coursed through his veins, setting his brain on fire. He was, however, in such a fever that the brandy appeared cold to him. He poured out a second glass, and threw himself down heavily into a chair. There his thoughts resumed their former course.

Who knew if that man sleeping down in the shop below, had not lied when he affirmed that he had been sent by Thorel. If he were no friend of Thorel's——"

Here Leroux sprang up from his chair and poured himself out a third glass of brandy. By a rapid progression of thought, from suspecting Monpazier, he now began to accuse him. He is certainly a traitor, a spy, an emissary of Pitt, and well furnished with gold by the English to prosecute his nefarious designs against the Republic. It is that gold which was paid for by the blood of Frenchmen, probably. Ah, that

gold, gold—and again in the ears of the unhappy man, menaced with ruin, a voice whispered persistently, “A fortune, a fortune.”

’Twas something more than a fortune; it was life, salvation, to the merchant threatened with bankruptcy. He approached the buffet again and swallowed another glass of brandy, and another, and another, in rapid succession.

His face was now swollen and inflamed, his eyes protruding, great drops of sweat rolled down his cheeks. He spoke aloud in thick, savage tones :

“And this fortune is in the hands of a man under sentence of death, yes, of death. His would be but a short shrift, were he to fall into the hands of the Jacobins.” Still the unhappy man made one last despairing effort to struggle against temptation.

“Suppose you go to this aristocrat—he professed gratitude to you for saving his life—and tell him your troubles. He would, perhaps, not refuse to help you. Here I have excited myself quite needlessly about what is only a simple matter of business. I will go to him now, and tell him what a plight I am in.” He swallowed another glass of brandy to give him courage to confess his necessity to this young man, a stranger. By this time, between his excitement and the brandy he had drunk, he was really quite beside himself. One idea had taken possession of his fuddled, muddled brain, one idea to the exclusion of every other. He must have that money. He must be saved from ruin. A loan would save him ; then a loan he must have. Ah, a famous idea it was, he chuckled foolishly, for Thorel to send a *ci-devant* here with a fortune to save me. He threw back his head resolutely, and, taking the lamp

in his hand descended the staircase to the shop. Once he stopped in his descent. He thought he heard his daughter moving about in her room. "It is for her sake that I am going to do this," he muttered, and then went on again.

And now he no longer accused and denounced Monpazier to himself. His guest in his eyes was no longer a spy, a traitor, he would be a friend, a saviour to him in this time of necessity.

He smiled. His head no longer burned and throbbed and ached. He felt quite confident and happy as he reeled heavily into the shop where Gérard lay sleeping the heavy sleep of an utterly wearied-out man.

Leroux put down the lamp and bent over the sleeper.

"He sleeps sound," he murmured. "Better not wake him. Why not leave it till the morrow?" The thought, however, occurred to him that Monpazier in his haste to be off, might, if he awoke early, leave without waiting to bid his host farewell, and as he had come down to ask assistance of his guest, why not have it over now?

"He can sleep afterward, and I too," he muttered. Leroux was, from the brandy he had swallowed, no longer conscious of what he intended to do or say. One thought alone overshadowed all others. To awake the sleeper and tell him what he desired of him.

He placed the lamp on a counter, and walking heavily, he approached the bed. The noise did not awaken the weary man. Leroux coughed once or twice in hopes of arousing him. Monpazier, worn out with fatigue, still continued to sleep. The draper now leant over him and looked down at him intently. Over the face of the sleeper a spasm of pain passed suddenly. Some

unquiet dream, it was plain, haunted the pillow of the fugitive. Leroux, smiling the imbecile smile of an intoxicated man, knelt down by the bedside.

His shadow, immensely exaggerated in the lamplight, was projected grotesquely across the bed and on the wall beyond. Bending over Monpazier, Leroux laid his hand heavily on his breast.

The next moment he was startled and astonished by the brusque and violent movement made by the other at his touch. Awaking with a sharp cry of terror, and raising himself up and seeing the huge shadow of some one unknown bending over him, Gérard, only half awake, cried :

“Who is there? Villain, what are you here for?” And, drawing his pistol from under his pillow, placed it close up to the breast of the disturber of his sleep and pulled the trigger.

The weapon was held so tightly against Leroux's breast that it did not go off, simply flashing in his face. Then followed a horrible struggle between Gérard, and, as it seemed to him, this unknown monster who had attacked him in his sleep. Monpazier succeeded in struggling into a sitting posture and clutching his antagonist with both hands by the collar, endeavoured, but in vain, to throw his assailant to one side, and spring out of the bed.

Leroux, irritated and frenzied by the reception, quite unlooked-for, that his endeavour to awake Monpazier had met with, placed one knee on the other's chest, and grasped the throat of the young man with both of his gigantic hands.

He was by this time quite beside himself. He held his victim's throat in a grasp of iron, his nails sinking

deep into the flesh. The other struggled violently, but in vain, to free himself from this murderous grasp. His face grew black, his eyeballs protruded from their sockets, his tongue hung far out of his mouth. The cruel hands did not release their hold, the heavy knee pressed down firmer and firmer on his struggling, convulsed form, convulsed in the agonies of strangulation. Leroux, infuriated by the brandy and the thought that his victim had drawn a pistol upon him, gazed down cruelly, exultantly, on the blackened visage, the writhing figure. He muttered between his teeth:

“Defend yourself, would you draw a pistol on an unarmed man; would you, you villain!”

While still holding Monpazier's throat, his naked foot, from which the slipper had dropped off, came in contact with a bit of metal. It was one of the louis d'or dropped by Gérard a few hours previously. The touch of the gold seemed to awaken him from his frenzy. He took his knee off Gérard's breast slowly. When he disengaged his hands from the throat, the body fell back with a dull thud on the pillow and lay there quite motionless. The purple face, the protruding tongue, the eyes starting from their sockets, a horrid spectacle in the dim rays of the lamp.

Leroux gazed down at it wonderingly. “What is it? What has happened?” he asked himself. He bent down over the body and touched it. Lifting it up in his arms, he shook it once or twice, laid his ear on the chest, then let it drop back again on the bed shuddering. Had he killed this man, his guest, André Thorel's friend? Oh, no, no, it could not be! He was not dead! Men do not die so easily. A soldier, too, who had faced death in battle a thousand times. He

could not be killed in another man's naked hands. Strangled to death in his bed! Impossible!

Again Leroux threw himself down on his knees by the side of the bed, searching wildly for some signs of life in the form before him.

In vain! The protruding eyes stared at him blankly out of a blackened, disfigured visage. There were the marks of the cruel, clutching fingers on the throat. Dead! Yes, he was quite dead. No doubt of that.

"A murderer—an assassin!" Leroux repeated the words again and again to himself, softly. Something, too, seemed to whisper it in the air around, above, about him. His face, but a moment before purple with frenzy, was now livid with terror. He shook in every limb; the cold sweat rolled in great drops down his pale cheeks. He was quite sober by this time. Whispering hoarsely:

"Great God! Am I a murderer?" he threw himself face downward on the body of his victim. Placing his mouth against the blue, livid lips, he strove to breathe life through them into the cold, still form. In vain, a corpse lay stretched out before him.

As he knelt there in an agony of remorse and horror, his hand suddenly touched the belt containing the rouleaux of gold which was buckled around the waist of the murdered man, and his face lighted up suddenly with an expression of satisfied greed and brutal joy.

The fortune of this man was in his hands. There would be no one to claim it. The gold—it was his now. Gold—it was bliss to touch it, to handle it, to know it was his own.

And now it was no longer a man, remorseful, repentant, who knelt there, but a fiend exulting in the touch

of gold, as a tiger exults in the taste of blood. He took off the belt and broke open one of the rouleaux. How the bright metal glittered in the lamplight. With eyes full of greed he gazed long and exultantly at the coins, caressing them with his thick, heavy fingers. The caress—the touch of a thief and a robber. He saw nothing now but the gold. He forgot the stark, stiff figure on the bed. He was unconscious that the door leading from the shop, at the foot of the winding staircase, was pushed open, and that a woman's face, white with horror, was looking in through the aperture at him as he knelt there, plunging his hand into the pile of gold pieces on the floor. "Gérard de Monpazier's gold," Germaine told herself, with a shudder. By the dim light of the lamp, it was impossible for her to see that the figure lying there on the bed in the recess was no longer a living one. She only saw that her father had robbed his guest; she was still mercifully unconscious of the fact that he had murdered him.

CHAPTER IX.

THREE WOMEN.

GERMAINE LEROUX, as she stole up the stair again to her chamber, asked herself if she were really awake ; if she were not the victim of some horrible hallucination. Sitting on her bed, her hands pressed tightly against her heart, frozen with horror, again and again the frightful vision returned to her. Her father kneeling by the side of the bed where their guest lay, plunging his hands into the lous scattered in a heap upon the floor.

Her father, he whom she had loved and venerated—he to have committed a crime ! It was impossible.

She determined suddenly to go down to the shop again and speak with her father. She got up and tottered toward the door, but fell to the floor unconscious. How long she lay there she never knew. The sun was streaming in at the window when she came to herself again.

She sat up and looked around her wonderingly. What had happened ? she asked herself. Suddenly the horrid sight of the night before returned to her memory. She would go down stairs and see her father. It could not be true. No, no ; she had had a dreadful dream, a frightful nightmare.

She plunged her face into a basin of cold water, made some slight changes in her dress, and quitted her room. In the hall she ran against her father.

For one moment she found it impossible to lift her eyes to his face; the next, however, she had lifted the lids, gazed searchingly, questioningly, at him.

Leroux smiled. He was paler than usual, but quite calm.

He extended his hand to his daughter and stooped forward to imprint a kiss on her forehead. She drew back involuntarily.

“What is the matter with you?” he inquired.

“Nothing,” she faltered, still gazing at him, but now a ray of hope lit up her great dark eyes. No one who had committed a crime could stand there so calm, so smiling, she told herself.

“Where is Monsieur de Monpazier?” she asked quickly.

Not a muscle in Leroux’s face quivered.

“Monsieur de Monpazier is gone,” he answered quietly.

“Did he go last night?” she asked.

“This morning.”

“Ah,” she sighed. She dared make no further inquiries. It was she now who trembled before her father.

“Monsieur de Monpazier desired to be off,” he continued in a dry, cold tone. “He pretended not to feel safe here. He imagined that he had been followed by some one the night before, that his place of refuge was known to his enemies.”

“And you allowed him to go?”

“How could I help it? He was quite anxious to be gone.”

She was glad to return upstairs and prepare breakfast, but when seated at the table opposite her father, she found herself unable to swallow a morsel. Leroux,

too, ate little. With a sudden gesture he pushed back his plate, exclaiming half under his breath, as though quite unconscious of his daughter's presence,

"At last—I am saved."

Saved! What did he mean, Germaine asked herself; and at the word, all her doubts, her fears, returned. She inquired suddenly,

"Father, what has become of our guest of last night?"

"What do you suppose has become of him?" Leroux asked, angrily. "How should I know what has become of him? He went where it would suit him better than here, most likely. To Thorel's, probably. Yes, by this time he will be at Thorel's, I should imagine. As he was going off, he mentioned Thorel's name, I remember."

While speaking, the draper had grown as white as the napkin he held in his hand, but his daughter never noticed it. A great wave of hope made her heart swell at the mention of Thorel's name. "After all," she told herself, "it is quite probable that Monsieur de Monpazier has gone to his friend's. I will go there and inquire for him." She left the dining-room as soon as breakfast was over and changed her dress.

"Where are you going?" asked her father, as she came into the shop where he sat at his desk, equipped for walking.

"To the Rue Vieux Augustins to pay the Thorels a visit." He made no answer, letting her go in silence.

The air outside, fresh and bright, revived her drooping spirits and drove her gloomy fancies away.

She walked with a quick, light step. The sight of the passers-by, the noise, the bustle on all sides cheered her.

She was now quite ready to believe that the whole occurrence of the preceding night was only a dream.

A horrid dream, and so real too, but yet, after all, only a dream.

Just as she turned into one of the narrow alleys running into the Louvre, she observed a group of persons clustered around something lying on the pavement. As she came nearer, she could see that it was the body of a man. The face she did not see. The figure was that of a young, slender man, dressed in dark clothes.

She hurried by with averted eyes. Some words from those around the body fell upon her ears. "An emigré in disguise probably." "No, no," was the answer, "a victim of an aristocrat, rather."

She hurried on with feverish haste. She could hardly keep herself from breaking into a run. Why should she try to see whose the corpse might be of which she had caught a glimpse just now. It certainly was no concern of hers. At Thorel's she would find out if Monpazier was alive or not, but of course he was alive—she would certainly find him there.

On arriving at Clotilde's she found the latter in the act of tying mechanically a silk ribbon round the waist of her gown; she was evidently about to go out.

Pale as death, her eyes showing large and dark in the haggard face—haggard from a night of anxiety and sleeplessness, she burst into a cry of delight at the sight of Germaine.

"Oh," she exclaimed joyfully, "you have come to bring me news of André! He was at your house last night."

"I have seen nothing of Citizen Thorel," returned Germaine, wonderingly. "Has anything happened? Why should he have left his own house to pass the night with us?"

“Is it possible you do not know? He is a proscribed fugitive. He and his whole party have been accused and denounced by the Mountain. They have been decreed under arrest at their own homes. To escape this decree André has fled, and since early yesterday morning I have not seen him or had one word from him. I thought——”

“You thought I had brought you news of him, but I have come instead, seeking news from you of another person, a fugitive, like your husband. Did not some one come to you late last night?”

“A fugitive?” returned Clotilde slowly, looking straight into the dark eyes of the girl before her.

“Yes, an emigré—a proscribed man—a suspect—a young man—a nobleman—a Royalist.” She trembled with anxiety as she spoke, dreading to receive a reply in the negative.

“Why do you ask such a question?” inquired the other suspiciously.

“Because if you can tell me that you gave such a man shelter last night, you will cause me to experience the greatest joy I have ever felt in my whole life before.”

The tones of beseeching agony in which these words were spoken did not fail to affect the listener.

“Very well,” she returned, “a fugitive did come here to me for shelter.”

“Here,” exclaimed Germaine, with a great cry of joy. The poor girl could hardly trust her own ears. The frightful vision of the night before, her father at the bedside of their guest, plunging his hands into the stolen gold, was only a dreadful nightmare after all. She had been out of her senses to believe her dear, her

honoured father guilty of a crime. She longed to throw her arms around Clotilde's neck, and shed there tears of delight.

"It was a gentleman who came here last night?" she inquired again, however. She must be quite satisfied of the truth. A Royalist—a *ci-devant*?"

Why do you question me so closely?" returned Clotilde, impatiently, "I have already told you he was here."

"It is not that I wish to do him any harm."

"Of that I am quite sure, dear child, and I will tell you the truth. Yes, the man was a young man—an ex-noble—a Royalist."

And now the dark eyes of the girl, but a moment before so haggard and anxious, filled with happy tears. Monpazier was safe. Her father had spoken the truth. How she longed to fly to him and beg his forgiveness for her undutiful, unfilial thoughts.

"The gentleman is quite safe?" she asked smilingly.

"I trust so."

"He is no longer here?"

"No, there was danger in his remaining here."

"Yes, that was the reason too, he left my father's shop. He was afraid he might have been followed."

"At your father's shop? He did not speak of being there."

"Probably he had no time to tell you so, but he passed the greater part of the night in the shop, sleeping on the shopman's bed."

"The night," returned Clotilde, with a puzzled air.

"Monsieur de Monpazier did not tell you then that he came in the evening—?"

Clotilde interrupted her, astonished.

"Is Monsieur de Monpazier the fugitive of whom you have been speaking?"

"Yes. Monsieur de Monpazier came to you last night, or, rather, this morning, did not he?"

"Monsieur de Monpazier—this morning—" repeated Clotilde, blankly.

"Yes, this morning—quite early this morning!" repeated Germaine wildly.

"Nobody came here this morning, it was last evening, and it was not Monsieur de Monpazier, it was Monsieur de Puyjoli seeking Monsieur de Monpazier, his elder brother."

"Ah," exclaimed Germaine, with an exceeding bitter cry. "Monsieur de Puyjoli, then, is the brother of M. de Monpazier?"

She stood there as pale as death, as though turned to stone at the words she had heard.

"You thought," asked Clotilde, moved to pity at the sight of the girl's stony despair, "it must have been M. de Monpazier who was here last evening?"

"Yes," the other answered mechanically.

"M. de Puyjoli came here to look for his brother. He was very much surprised and alarmed at not finding him here; but if he was with you of course he would be quite safe. And he left early this morning to come here did you say? He must have heard on the way hither of André's being proscribed and denounced in the Convention. Ah, what terrible times are these we live in, Germaine! On all sides of us danger and bloodshed—and I, I do not know where my husband is, or even if he be alive. And as for M. de Puyjoli—"

The name Puyjoli rang like a knell in Germaine's

ears, shattering all her hopes. It was not her father's guest whom Clotilde had sheltered, but his brother. And, suddenly, in the twinkling of an eye, she saw again that savage spectacle in the shop recess the evening before—saw her father bending over the bedside—saw the scattered gold pieces—saw the figure extended rigid, motionless, upon its narrow couch.

On awaking from her swoon after that terrible vision of the night, Germaine told herself that fate had done its worst. She had, she thought, reached the limit of her endurance, but now another and greater burden of sorrow was added to her already overburdened heart. The man whom her father had murdered was the brother of the man she loved—loved secretly indeed, but with what a depth of tenderness, of devotion !

Clotilde, in the meanwhile, was filled with anxiety concerning her husband's fate. Puyjoli had been able to give her information that her husband had been to the house the evening before,—but, owing to the sentinels stationed in her apartment, he had been unable to get to her. The worthy cobbler had also been able to tell her that at present the Girondins were in no absolute danger ; they were simply under arrest at their own homes, pending the judgment of the Tribunal.

Perceiving the alarm this word "judgment" had excited in Clotilde, he added kindly:—

"Do not be uneasy, Citizeness. The deputies will surely be acquitted. There has only arisen a slight misunderstanding between the two opposing parties in the Convention. It will soon pass over."

Clotilde had been thankful to know that André had escaped arrest. She would have rejoiced to learn that he had escaped from Paris where dangers awaited him

on every side. But surely he might have sent her some word to reassure her.

"Your father," she exclaimed abruptly, as though a sudden thought had struck her, "your father has not seen Thorel?"

"No," returned Germaine sighing, "would to God he had come to us for shelter."

"Where can he be?" repeated Clotilde. "At whose door can he have sought refuge? Where can he be concealed? Alas, perhaps he is no longer living."

At these words, she took up her hat from the couch where it was lying, and began tying its gay tri-coloured ribbons under her chin nervously.

"You are going," inquired Germaine, mechanically, "you are going——"

"I do not know where. I must seek for tidings of my husband among his friends, if one so unfortunate has any friends. But I must have news of him. I shall go to the Convention if I can hear nothing elsewhere of him. I shall go there to supplicate for him, to defend him."

"If we should go to M. de Louverchal's together," suggested Germaine.

"M. de Louverchal's?" returned Clotilde, not understanding her.

"M. de Louverchal is from the same province as M. de Puyjoli. I have heard so from M. de Puyjoli himself."

"I am acquainted with the former Marquis de Louverchal. I have often visited at his house in Perigueux with Madame de Trémolat, my patroness."

"M. de Puyjoli is a frequent visitor at the house of M. de Louverchal, and it is probable he went straight from here, there."

"But Thorel does not know M. de Puyjoli," exclaimed Clotilde impatiently.

"Who knows? Citizen Thorel was the friend from childhood of M. de Monpazier. We may, at Hôtel de Louverchal, get news of them both."

Clotilde understood but one thing of what Germaine had been saying,—that at the Louverchals, she might hear something of her husband. As for Germaine, she was wildly anxious to learn if Gaston were in safety. Since she had reason to believe his brother had been the victim of a cruel and pitiless fate, she was doubly anxious to be assured of the other's safety.

Still, Clotilde demurred to following Germaine's proposition to go to the hôtel in the Rue Mirabeau.

"It hardly seems possible that Gaston would go to M. de Louverchal's for shelter, as by doing so he would be likely to imperil the lives of M. de Louverchal and his daughter, who besides are, themselves, at any moment, liable to be arrested as 'suspects' by the Commune. As for André, he would not surely have gone with Puyjoli to the Marquis's, for he is quite unknown to both of them."

"Who knows what has happened during the night? Who knows what strange freak of fate may have brought your husband and M. de Puyjoli together?" returned Germaine, clinging obstinately to the idea that from M. de Louverchal they would be able to get some news of the Viscount.

"Very well, we can go there if you wish it," returned Clotilde, submissively.

The two women left the house in company. The sun was shining brightly on this June morning. They

walked rapidly and silently through the streets leading to the hôtel in the Rue Mirabeau.

When they arrived there, they found the hôtel to all appearance, quite unoccupied. The shutters were closed and bolted, there were no signs of life about the court-yard. In reply to their repeated knocking, however, the great door was opened cautiously, and Bonnemain's white, terror-stricken face looked out.

To Clotilde's question if Citizen Louverchal were at home, he answered nervously,

"No, Mad—no, Citizeness—he went out this morning."

"He is out? say then, to Mademoiselle de Louverchal that I should like to see her. You do not remember me?"

Bonnemain excused himself anxiously, with many glances askance at the tri-coloured hat ribbons. The citizeness must pardon him. His nerves had been so upset, his head so bewildered by the tumult in the streets the day before. Mademoiselle de Louverchal was at home. He would go and announce the citizeness. "I remember, you know, but what name am I to announce to Mademoiselle de Louverchal? Your name was just at my tongue's end, but it has left me again. Oh, what a head is mine!"

"The wife of Citizen Thorel, member of the National Convention would speak with your mistress."

"The wife of Citizen Thorel, member of the Convention," echoed Bonnemain faintly, going off rapidly to announce her. He returned presently with word that Mademoiselle de Louverchal would see the wife of Citizen Thorel, and ushered Clotilde and her companion into the small drawing-room where the pastel portrait

of the young mistress of the house formed the principal ornament. The light sifted dimly into the room from the closed and drawn blinds; the furniture, concealed under brown holland coverings, gave the room a desolate and disused appearance.

Bertha had been rather alarmed at hearing that the wife of a Conventional desired to see her, but on entering the drawing-room the sight of the pale, grief-stricken faces of the two women convinced her it was on no sinister errand they had come.

"To what do I owe the honour of your visit?" she inquired in a manner slightly haughty and in a clear, metallic, almost hard, tone, "Mad—" she stopped suddenly, at a loss evidently what title to use in addressing the wife of one of the leaders of the Republican party.

"I am the wife of Citizen Thorel," returned Clotilde, understanding her hesitation. "My friend and I have come to inquire if you have any news of two suspected persons—my husband, and M. de Puyjoli."

An expression at once bored and annoyed appeared on the pretty, piquant face of Mademoiselle de Louverchal. She answered in a tone which she took no pains to keep from being scornful,

"I know that M. de Puyjoli is in Paris. Where, however, I am unable to say."

"You have not seen him then lately?" inquired Germaine, in her sweet, anxious voice.

"He was here the day before yesterday, but did not intimate to us that he was in danger. I should imagine that M. de Puyjoli is perfectly well able to take care of himself. As for M. Thorel," she made a little scornful gesture which said plainly, "with M. Thorel and his affairs I have nothing to do."

“It is because M. de Monpazier, the elder brother of M. de Puyjoli, was the friend of my husband that I came here in hopes——”

“I have not the honour of M. de Monpazier’s acquaintance,” returned Bertha, coldly. She experienced a new and strange sensation of jealousy at being confronted with this beautiful, gentle girl, so interested, evidently, in the fate of Puyjoli. She eyed her furtively, and was compelled to confess to herself that her rival was beautiful, of a far higher, nobler type of beauty than her own.

Besides the actress Clerval, there were other women whose heads had been turned by the Viscount’s beauty, it seemed,—beauty she had herself despised and reproached him with.

At this moment, however, the door opened and her father entered, much to her relief, for she had grown weary of her visitors. The Marquis was deadly pale, he struggled, however, for composure, smiling and rubbing his hands, which shook visibly under their lace ruffles. He bowed to the ladies, looking searchingly at them.

“Well,” inquired Bertha, calmly.

Her father stared at her with a stupefied air, and glanced warningly in the direction of Clotilde and her companion, who, understanding the Marquis wished to be alone with his daughter, made a movement to leave the room.

“No, no,” exclaimed Bertha, detaining them by a gesture.

“Say what you have to say, my father, here in Citizeness Thorel’s presence. Anything you may have to tell will only prove to her how delightful her friends, the Jacobins, make our lives for us. Citizen Thorel——”

M. de Louverchal shuddered involuntarily at the name; the spectre of proscription, of death itself, seemed personified in the graceful form and lovely face of the young woman before him.

"Well," he forced himself to say, "as far as I can hear, we have as yet escaped denunciation before the Commune."

"I have always told you that dunce, Bonnemain, is a coward."

"It was a false alarm of his this time, my daughter."

Bertha smiled scornfully, and Clotilde was not slow to perceive that this was a piece of bravado on the young girl's part, to show her how this daughter of a noble race laughed at danger, death itself, at the hands of the *canaille*.

Clotilde, in her turn, looked calmly at her antagonist; speaking in a clear voice, she said:

"I do not forget that I passed in Perigueux formerly many happy hours in your company. If my husband, André Thorel, should again be fortunate enough to recover his former position in the councils of his country, it is to his house I invite you to come to seek for safety, should you ever need it."

"I thank you, Madame," returned the Marquis, in tones of frigid courtesy, still, however, trembling with fear.

"Ah," exclaimed Bertha suddenly, turning towards Germaine and speaking quickly, "I remember now, M. de Puyjoli is probably at present at the house of a worthy man who some time ago invited him to come to him if he should find it necessary to go into hiding.

"And the name of this man?"

"I do not quite remember—Pêche, Puche—one of the prompters at the Comédie Française."

"Nicholas Pluche!" interrupted Clotilde, "it will be to Pluche's house that he has gone for safety."

Her face lighted up with joy and hope. Why had not she thought of Pluche before? Ah, what a fortunate idea it had been for Germaine to come to the de Louverchals'. But she was now in a hurry to be off.

"Come, let us go," she whispered to her companion, pulling at her sleeve gently. However, just as they were about taking their leave, Bertha addressed Germaine abruptly.

"Pardon me, but do not you live in the Rue du Mail? Are not you the daughter of Leroux, the draper? M. de Puyjoli has spoken of you to me."

"M. de Puyjoli spoke to you of me?" repeated Germaine falteringly.

"Yes, often," returned the other, looking searchingly at the girl before her. Her gaze told her that the other was beautiful—more beautiful than she at first supposed, with the grave, gracious beauty of a saint or a martyr. Clotilde now, however, hurried her companion away.

"You are going to Nicholas Pluche's?" inquired Germaine, when the two were again in the street.

"Certainly, at once."

"Have not you thought that you who are known to be the wife of a proscribed and fugitive deputy may be watched and followed by one of the spies of the Commune?"

"You are quite right," returned Clotilde, stopping suddenly. "What shall I do?" she asked wildly; "I cannot longer endure this suspense."

"Let me go there in your place. M. de Puyjoli is there too, probably. No one will think of watching me."

"Thank you, thank you," returned the other rapturously. "Go you in alone to Pluche's. But oh, Germaine, if you knew how I longed for the sight of my husband's face, the sound of his voice once more!"

"And yet you have hardly been separated two days from each other," returned Germaine, with a faint smile.

"It is the hour of rehearsal at the Théâtre de la Nation," replied Clotilde; "if we should go there first together, we could see Pluche, and perhaps get news of André."

They went together to the theatre and waited at the door until Pluche came out. With a quick movement Clotilde placed herself in front of him. They walked off together, Pluche between the two young women.

When they were at a safe distance from the theatre, Clotilde whispered, "Thorel?"—Germaine, "M. de Puyjoli?" Two rapid movements of the little man's head sufficed to answer these questions. He bent his head slightly in answer to Clotilde's inquiry, shook it in reply to Germaine's.

"I wish to see my husband," she whispered feverishly.

Only another shake—a vehement one this time—replied to her. They were now at the corner of the street, when Pluche said, under his breath, at the sight of a man approaching from the other side,

"Citizen Piroutel—hush! do not speak!—I will write you."

Then, executing an elaborate bow, he wheeled round on his heels and went forward to greet the citizen.

Clotilde, comforted and reassured by the news that her husband was at Pluche's, now declared her intention of returning home.

"And you, Germaine, where are you going?" she inquired kindly before leaving her.

"I?—oh, I shall go home again," sighed Germaine wearily.

Her tone arrested even Clotilde's notice, filled as her heart was with thoughts of her husband, so full of hopelessness was it. What was it that caused Germaine such grief? No danger menaced her father, no one she loved was a hunted, miserable fugitive. She had half a mind to question the girl, to inquire the cause of her sorrow; but even as she thought, Germaine had taken leave of her, and with a slow, dragging step—the step of a criminal going to the scaffold—had turned, and was walking off in the opposite direction.

CHAPTER X.

THROUGH PARIS.

CLOTILDE'S heart beat high with hope at hearing her husband was with the Pluches in the Rue Hauteville.

Dear, kind, brave man, thought she, gratefully, and to think it should be he—a chance acquaintance—hardly more—who should be the saviour of André's life.

She passed the remainder of the day alone at home, a prey to anxious fears. In the evening, however, there came a note from Pluche.

“Do not endeavour to see him. He does not wish it. For his happiness and yours you had better make no effort to see him. Patience—silence.”

She read and re-read the note again and again a hundred times. The oftener she read it the stranger the tone of it appeared. “He does not wish it.” Does not wish me to come to him—but why? But no, the command not to see him—for it was a command—was a wise one, necessitated by present circumstances, and she would obey it implicitly. But why could not André have written her a word—one little, little word—to show her he loved her, that he longed for her as she for him?

She made up her mind, on reading the note, to go to the theatre again the next morning and ask for Citizen

Pluche. No one had forbidden her to see Citizen Pluche.

On the next day, at the hour of rehearsal, she was told that Citizen Pluche was engaged—could not see her just then. The porter, however, invited her to come into his box and wait there for him. She seated herself on a rickety chair there to wait. As she sat, the pretty, laughing face of an actress appeared at the door, and a gay, melodious voice inquired,

“No letters for me to-day!”

“No, Citizeness.”

“No letters—ah, my admirers are growing careless, I fear. Not even one madrigal awaiting me from some despairing lover!” And the face disappeared, to the accompaniment of fresh, youthful laughter.

“It is Citizeness Clerval,” said the porter to Clotilde.

“She is very pretty,” she answered absently.

“Pretty! I should think so!—and so kind. No one could be kinder.”

Pluche now appeared, a shade of embarrassment, of reserve in his greeting, that did not escape Clotilde’s notice and excited her wonder.

“Pardon me, Citizeness, for keeping you waiting, but the rehearsal was longer than usual to-day.”

Clotilde drew him aside, and laying her white hand, covered with a black lace mitten, on his sleeve, she inquired earnestly, speaking in a whisper,

“My husband?”

“Safe.”

“With you?”

Pluche nodded.

“I wish to see him,” she continued, feverishly.

“Impossible.”

“Why?”

“It would be highly dangerous—for you as for him, and then——”

“And then?”

“You got my note?”

“Yes.”

“Well, then you must know that it is he who forbids your coming to him.”

“André?”

“Of course. It is his idea altogether, and he is probably right in doing so. You must be prudent, patient.” He caught hold of Clotilde’s hand as he spoke, and taking it in both his own shrivelled ones, continued kindly: “I will try and send you word if anything should happen. I will write again, if necessary. For the present be content to know that your husband is in safety.” A bell rang loudly, “That is for me—I must go. Adieu.” He waved his hand and disappeared through the door quickly.

Clotilde stood there looking after his retreating form blankly. His behaviour, his words, were quite incomprehensible to her. She only understood one thing, poor faithful soul, that her husband did not wish to see her. Well, as he had ordered her not to come to him, she would obey him, but that would not prevent her from making every effort to save him.

She determined to appeal to Danton, yes, to invoke even the aid of Robespierre. In the meantime, haunting as she did daily the corridors of the Hall of the Convention, she encountered Saint Just there.

The young and handsome Jacobin was fashionably dressed. He carried himself elegantly, his long, golden hair fell in ringlets on the collar of a coat sky-blue in

colour. Around his slender throat, a cravat of spotless muslin was carefully tied. He walked with his head aloft and eyes looking straight before him.

"Citizen," exclaimed Clotilde, stepping in front of him, "I have a service to ask of you."

"Of me?" returned Saint Just, not a muscle moving in his cold, impassive face, beautiful as that of a Greek statue.

"Of you. My husband has been decreed under arrest by the Convention; my husband, who is every inch a patriot, and yet he is proscribed, denounced. He, a true, faithful servant of France, of the people."

"Is he one of my colleagues?" inquired Saint Just.

"It is André Thorel."

Saint Just frowned slightly and threw back his head haughtily, without, however, disarranging a fold in his starched and spotless cravat.

"André Thorel is a member of the Gironde party, decreed under arrest since the second of June, but he is still a member of the Convention, though detained as a prisoner in his own house."

"Very well, my husband wishes this order of arrest rescinded."

"One of his colleagues, Bertrand Labosdinières, former member of the Committee of Twelve, has just written a letter to the Convention, humbly praying to be set at liberty by that body." He continued, perceiving that Clotilde had started nervously at his last words. "Let Thorel write such a letter, and I will take it upon myself to deliver it over to the Convention, and will, as I have done for Bertrand Labosdinières, recommend him to the clemency of that body, holding him, as I do, rather mistaken than culpable——"

“Culpable,” returned Clotilde, impetuously, “My husband, a patriot to his heart’s core; culpable, guilty of any sin towards the Republic? It is impossible! He to write a letter asking pardon! He is incapable of such cowardice!”

“Possibly,” returned Saint Just, icily; “still, I see no cowardice in submitting one’s self to the law.”

He made a step forward as he spoke, as a sign that he desired to put an end to the interview, and, waving his hand in adieu, he marched on, looking neither to the right nor left.

Still Clotilde did not despair of saving her husband; but how? Day by day the situation of the Girondins grew more perilous. Drouet, member for Varennes, had already demanded of the Convention that the members under arrest at their own homes should be taken from there and shut up in the prison of the Abbey. The proscribed deputies also had begun to flee from Paris. It was Panazol, the shoemaker, who brought news of their flight to Clotilde. One day it was Barbaroux and Grangeneuve, the next, Louvet or Larivière.

On the 23rd of June, in the morning, Pétion escaped from Paris; Lajuinais followed in the afternoon of the same day.

Mollevant fled on the night of the 24th; with him went Pache, former mayor of Paris.

André, however, safely hidden away at Nicholas Pluche’s, remained, as his wife knew, in Paris. And yet she could not see him, and the poor, constant soul pined for the sight of his beloved face, if but for a moment.

One day she made up her mind to go to Danton.

"Danton has a heart—is humane," she remembered having heard her husband say.

She turned her steps in the direction of the Cour de Commerce, where Danton lodged, in the same house with Camille Desmoulins and his beautiful young wife. Her heart beat fearfully as, after traversing the court, she found herself mounting the dark staircase leading to Danton's apartment. Her terror, however, died away when she found herself in the presence of this "Colossus of the Commune."

Danton was seated at his table in a room furnished in accordance with his combined occupations—that of a statesman and a man of letters. On the walls hung pictures of value; bookcases filled with books were on every side.

Dressed in a dressing-gown of flowered damask, an embroidered waistcoat, a shirt, the unbuttoned collar of which displayed his brawny throat and a portion of hairy chest, Danton raised his shaggy head and saluted his visitor politely, on the servant's announcing her.

She would have probably recoiled at the sight of this rugged, stern countenance, with its beetling, overhanging eyebrows, its thick nose, its contorted mouth, had not the smile with which he greeted her softened and tempered its severity marvellously.

He extended his great shaggy hand toward her, exclaiming at the same time in rough yet cordial tones:

"*Salut*, Citizeness, thou art the wife of André Thorel, then?" he began, using the familiar pronoun "thou" to her, as he did to every one.

"Yes, Citizen."

"And thou hast come here to ask me to plead his cause before the Commune?"

“Yes, Citizen, and if you plead my husband’s cause, it will be won.”

“Thou thinkest so,” he returned, shrugging his huge shoulders doubtfully, “but thou art not the only one who has come with like petitions to me. The wives, the relatives, the friends of other Girondins besiege my doors daily. Still, thy husband is one for whom I have always had a great esteem and admiration. A sound head, a strong heart, a great soul, and the public has need of such sons as he. But why does he hesitate to become one of us? Why cannot he see that with the Cordeliers, as with the Girondins, there is but one aim, one desire—to serve and save France. The Girondins, however, are blind leaders of the people. There are talent, genius, learning among them, but neither strength nor steadfastness. One cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs, and yet the Girondins talk about the crime of blood-shedding. The blood of traitors is the rain which shall water the roots of the tree of Liberty.

“Listen, Citizeness; the fugitive Girondins—news has come to me this morning—have levied an army at Caen, and at Evreux, an army which will take to flight like a bevy of partridges at the first encounter with the patriots. Thy husband, I trust, is not with these madmen—these traitors.”

“My husband is in Paris. He would be the last one to plunge France by his counsels or acts into a civil war.” And as Danton continued to speak of France, whose freedom he desired, and for which he combated, she interrupted him boldly with the words:

“Is it necessary in order to secure freedom to France, that her sons who have served her well and faithfully should now be fugitives and prisoners?”

“No, no, certainly not, Citizeness, and I tell thee the time has come now for France to pardon and forget. May that happy day soon rise upon my longing eyes, that I may return to my native province, and pass the remainder of my life among my friends and books there.” He extended his hand in farewell to Clotilde, adding:

“If I can give back thy husband to thy faithful, courageous breast, rest assured I shall do so.”

Clotilde thanked him, but she besought him before leaving, for some promise more definite.

“Ah,” he returned, smilingly, “I have promised to try, but it is out of my power to promise that I shall succeed.”

“But you are Danton, nevertheless.”

“Danton is, however, of small consequence in times like these,” he interrupted her, “a voice, nothing more. And the voices of the Girondins are many and far more eloquent than mine. But what a man can do for thy husband, I will do. Rely on me.” And with this promise she had to be content.

And how empty and solitary now appeared the dwelling where she and André had passed so many happy days in company. No one came to see her, except occasionally Panazol, carrying a shoe ostentatiously in his hand as a cover to his visit to her, to bring her some news gleaned from the newspapers or on the streets, of the party to which her husband belonged.

The days passed, and still Nicholas Pluche’s interdict not to come to his house to see her husband, remained unrescinded.

She could endure this state of anxiety and suspense no longer. One day she closed her dwelling, giving

the key to the *concierge*, and disappeared, without leaving any trace of her whereabouts behind her.

In the lodging-house directly opposite Pluche's there was a room to rent. One day a young woman dressed as a seamstress applied to the porter for it.

"Your trade, Citizeness?"

"A lace-mender."

"Your name?"

"Therèse Barbier."

"Married or single?"

"Single."

"Have you parents?"

"I am an orphan."

"A native of Paris?"

"Yes."

"You know," returned the porter, glancing suspiciously at her, "that this is a quiet house, Citizeness."

"I am a respectable woman, Citizen."

"Very well, in the chamber below lives Publicola Verdier, an ardent patriot."

"I, too, am a patriot."

"But you have no objection to actors?"

"To actors?"

"Because across from the room you wish to hire, is one occupied by Citizen La Bussière, a gay boy, Citizen La Bussière."

"I do not know him," returned the woman absently. The porter began to laugh.

"Not know him! Oh, well, it will not take you long to make his acquaintance. You must go and see him play Janot. You would enjoy it, I am sure."

"I have no time for amusement, Citizen."

"Ah, ah," returned the porter, who prided himself

on his gallantry. "But when one is young and pretty one needs some amusement."

The seamstress turned pale visibly.

"Well, well," returned the man reassuringly, "the lodging is yours, Citizeness. You said your name was Thérèse Bar——" inquired the porter, opening his ledger.

"Thérèse Barbier." And, while the porter was writing in his fashion with a screaming goose-quill on the page of the ledger, "Tes-rize Barrebié, seamstress," she inquired eagerly:

"What is the name of the old man living opposite?"

"He is not old," returned the porter, not looking up from his writing: "Citizen La Bussière."

"I am not speaking of him. I asked the little house opposite."

"Ah, yes, a fat little old man. That must be Citizen Pluche—Nicholas Pluche, second prompter at the Théâtre de la Nation, a friend of Publicola Verdier, and Citizen La Bussière.

CHAPTER XI.

RUE HAUTEVILLE.

ON the morning of Monday, July 1st, Citizeness Babet, dusting, as was her custom, the furniture and the little dresser of the dining-room, on which were arranged her painted china plates, cups and saucers, with glass jugs, glasses and tumblers, exclaimed to Nicholas, who was busy making corrections in some manuscripts at a little table near the window :

“ Nicholas, you have no idea what Publicola told me yesterday.”

“ No, Babet, I have not indeed,” putting down his quill, and looking at her curiously.

“ It appears that the Section Poissonnière stopped a cart yesterday, loaded with soap-boxes, as it was supposed. These soap-boxes, shipped from Orléans to Rouen, however, were found to contain gunpowder.”

“ Well,” returned Nicholas, quietly.

“ Well, you say, but if the Section has begun examining soap-boxes, it will end with searching people’s houses. It began at the Poissonnière barrier, it will finish with the Rue Hauteville.”

“ Are you out of your senses, Babet? do not be alarmed; the patriots will not come here to search for powder among your cups and dishes, or arms among my collection of play-house armour and weapons.”

Then, dropping his voice, he added, "or perhaps you are uneasy about our guest?"

"Yes, yes," returned Babet, "poor Citizen Thorel, I fear he has found our house during the month he has been with us, as dreary as a prison."

"Hardly," returned Nicholas, smiling, "he may be at a loss sometimes to kill time, but after all, that is better than being killed himself."

"But if he should be discovered here?"

"Well, he would be thrown into prison, tried and condemned, as so many of his associates have been before him; and with him——"

"You, my dear husband," exclaimed Babet, her fresh, honest face growing white as a corpse at the thought.

"Yes, and you too, my dear wife, but you seem to have forgotten your own danger."

"We ought to help others in their misfortune," she answered simply. Nicholas was silent a moment, then exclaimed,

"But suppose I were to propose our running a double risk?"

"A double risk?"

"Yes, to conceal another fugitive with Thorel."

"Another fugitive?"

"Suppose I were to tell you that I have already stowed away another person, proscribed by the Convention."

"Sheltered another! What, another Girondin?"

"No, no, not a Girondin this time." For a little variety I have hidden away an aristocrat, a *ci-devant*, the Viscount de Puyjoli, a former habitué of the Théâtre de la Nation. Puyjoli. The handsome Puyjoli. He who formerly had the actress Sophie Clerval

under his protection, and she in her turn has had him under her protection (in another fashion, however) for some weeks past, but his whereabouts was discovered a few days ago; he was obliged to flee by night and in disguise from the actress's apartments. Last night I brought him home here with me, Babet. Is not that a pleasant surprise for you? I am filling the house for you. We shall be in no danger for some time to come of being lonely."

"Gracious Heavens!" exclaimed Babet, throwing her arms despairingly above her head and falling heavily into the nearest chair. "And where have you hidden him—your *ci-devant*?"

"Down below."

"In the cellar?"

"And the Girondin in the attic," returned Pluche, merrily.

"Well, they will be in no danger of meeting, thank Heaven."

"They must meet, and at dinner to-day."

"Have them dine together! What on earth can you be thinking of, Pluche?"

"Yes, together," he returned firmly. "The Citizen André Thorel, face to face with the former Viscount de Puyjoli. The old régime and the new."

"But they will be throwing plates at each other's heads. The slightest discussion will——"

"Possibly. But there will be no discussion when the two dine with us."

Babet jumped off her chair impatiently.

"Mercy!" she exclaimed, "you are out of your senses, my dear Nicholas. Do not you know that the least noise here indoors can be heard outside in the street."

“ Yes, yes, the least noise, but I trust there will be no noise. Do you understand my plans? The Viscount is disguised, and quite unknown to Thorel. Take my word for it—we shall have a very pleasant dinner-party.”

“ Ah, Pluche, how kind you are, and how brave. I do not think there is another man in all Paris to-day as brave as you.”

“ You flatter your husband, Babet. Now go, and like a good soul, get dinner for us. Fugitives and suspects are, as I have already discovered, blessed with good appetites, as well they may be, poor devils, whose every meal may be their last.”

Shortly after, when Babet had disappeared in the kitchen, Thorel descended from his attic and entered the dining-room. Nicholas, on his appearing, went up to him, and turning him about, carefully examined the clothes he had on.

It was a traveling costume of dark blue cloth, similar to those worn by merchants from the Provinces on their visits to the capital. His head and part of his forehead were covered by a huge powdered wig.

“ Well, Citizen Pluche, are you satisfied with my disguise, the disguise you insisted on my donning? ”

Nicholas turned him round and round slowly, arranging here and there a fold or smoothing down a wrinkle, exclaiming ;

“ Very well, very well done, indeed ! No one would recognise you.”

At these words André made an impatient movement, which his host perceiving, added solemnly :

“ Citizen Thorel, it is not only on your own account, as a means of your own safety, that you are called to wear a disguise and masquerade in a manner distasteful

to you, but we, your hosts, are compelled for our own safety to ask the sacrifice of you."

"Forgive me, Pluche," exclaimed André, penitently, "forgive me that even for a moment I should have been forgetful of the risks you and your noble wife are content to run for my sake."

"The more I examine it," continued the worthy prompter, "the more perfect your disguise appears to me ; and, as the friend I brought back last night with me, the horse-dealer from Limousin I told you of, has very sharp eyes, I can congratulate you on your make-up. It is clever enough to deceive even him, I fancy. So, Citizen Thorel, we have agreed, have not we, that I am to introduce you to my friend as a native of Provence, here in Paris on business. Let me see—of what trade shall I say you are ? Ah, I have it, an oil merchant."

"An oil merchant," returned Thorel, wonderingly.

"Yes, because you can mimic the accent of Provence so well. Your wig a little farther forward, please, and you must have a hat. Ah, here is one," opening a wardrobe and taking out a three-cornered hat of drab felt. "And above all—the southern accent in speaking."

"I cannot promise to remember about the accent. Still, I will do my best. Though, after all, what does it matter ? My life is not worth taking all this trouble to keep."

"But our lives, Babet's and mine, are not they worth it ?" inquired Pluche, gravely.

"Forgive me," returned the other, remorsefully, "but after all, you had better let me go," and Thorel gave a longing look out of the window into the street.

"You find the confinement to the house irksome, as is natural," replied Pluche, gravely.

“Ah,” returned Thorel, “there are moments when I would give my life willingly for the privilege of crossing the threshold and going across the street into the house opposite.”

“The house opposite,” returned Pluche, with a queer little smile, “why the house opposite?”

“There is a woman I have seen at a window high up above me, a young woman sitting there sewing, who reminds me——”

“Reminds you of whom?”

“She sits there sewing, never raising her eyes from off the lace she is mending, but yet she is like, how like—but no, it is impossible—why should she be there, and in the disguise of a lace-mender?”

“But you have not told me yet of whom this seamstress reminds you?” inquired Nicholas, still with that queer little smile on his lips.

“Of whom she reminds me? Of whom but Clotilde, my wife,” murmured the other, sadly.

“I cannot allow you to look across the street at young women if it is going to make you impatient. You are my prisoner for the present, and I am such an obdurate jailer, I would keep even your thoughts from straying from your prison.”

“Thought is free; however,” returned Thorel, smiling sadly, “I will promise you not to endanger your life and that of your dear wife by breaking my captivity, and I will do my best to enact the rôle of an oil-merchant from the Provinces which you have laid out for me.”

Just here, the door leading into the garden was opened, and a man appeared on the threshold of it. A tall, gaunt man, with a thin, clean-shaven face, and long, pointed

nose. His tall form was clad in a vest and pantaloons of striped woollen, worn by the members of the Sections, a long red cotton night-cap, the end of which hung down over the left ear, was on his shaggy head. At sight of the new-comer, Nicholas whispered hurriedly to Thorel,

“Hush, danger—it is Publicola Verdier. The accent of the South, remember!”

Citizen Verdier strode majestically into the room, looking about him suspiciously. Behind him appeared the figure of another man, young, tall, elegant in figure, with a smiling face, and head covered with short curls of brown hair. He resembled a bust of some young Roman emperor.

Thorel threw a quick, examining glance at him. In Publicola Verdier, with his lean, gaunt figure and stern, ferocious countenance, it was easy to recognise a member of the society of Sans Culottes, a Spartan Republican.

His companion, on the contrary, well-dressed, smiling, scented, seemed the incarnation of a gay ancient Republican of Athens. But why Athens? Rather of Paris.

Nicholas advanced towards Verdier with outstretched hand of welcome.

“Ah, Citizen Verdier, what happy chance has brought you here?”

“It is no chance, it is duty—my duty to the Republic.

“Indeed?” returned Pluche, uneasily, fearing that Verdier, having become suspicious of André’s presence in the house, had come there to cross-examine him. “And what is this duty to the Republic,” he added,

recollecting himself, "which has sent you to my humble house—both of you here?" he added as an afterthought, with a glance in La Bussière's direction.

"A civic duty. I have had information that——"

André still kept a brave front, but the sight of Verdier and the sound of his words made him realise what danger he was in, and, worse than that, how his presence there imperilled the liberty, perhaps the lives, of his benefactors.

"Information concerning what?" returned Pluche, with his customary placid smile.

"Information has reached the Section of which I am president, that new faces have lately been seen in your dwelling. This man—who is he?" inquired he, with a suspicious glance in André's direction.

"Citizen Larcenac, from my native province, and on a visit to me at present."

André added, not forgetting the southern accent,

"Oil merchant from Marseilles."

The stern face of Verdier brightened suddenly.

"Ah, ah,—good citizens, they of Marseilles—I, too, am from the provinces, from Toulouse."

"We of Marseilles are proud to have been so fortunate as to have gained Citizen Publicola Verdier's esteem," returned André.

"They have heard of me in Marseilles, then?"

"Can you doubt it? A man so energetic, so untiring in his services to the Republic!"

Verdier smiled grimly, seemingly flattered, introducing La Bussière to the Girondin:

"Charles La Bussière, and a neighbour of yours, Pluche, like myself."

"I live in the house opposite,"

“Opposite?”

“Yes, in the same house with Publicola. I am an actor, as you yourself were once, and Citizen Verdier also.”

“A very poor one—I,” returned Nicholas modestly. “I am a much better prompter than I ever was an actor. But you now, Citizen La Bussière, are an actor—an artist. You have created for yourself a rôle as Ricco, and your make-up was so perfect that I should never have known you again. You have set people talking of you.”

“Where, pray?”

“At the theatre——”

“Of the Nation, as the people of Marseilles are talking of Publicola Verdier.”

“But you have created a *furore* at Mareux with your impersonation of young coxcombs and men of fashion. Only yesterday Sophie Clerval was talking to me about you—praising you to the skies.”

“Citizeness Clerval is too kind,—as kind as she is beautiful.”

“Mareux—who is Mareux?” exclaimed Thorel, in order to appear interested in what was going on about him.

Pluche smiled pityingly.

“Citizen Larcenac is quite a stranger in Paris, you perceive. Mareux is proprietor of a theatre in the Rue St. Antoine, where comedy is very well played. La Bussière is the principal actor there.”

“The public are kind enough to applaud my acting, but they would have applauded me yet more heartily, had I been willing, like Verdier here, to renounce my rôle of actor to take up with that of patriot.” Then

turning toward his companion, he added, "you were by the way of becoming a great tragedian."

"Ah," returned Verdier, in his metallic, resonant tones, "I still act a part in a tragedy, and I shall die on the stage where I have played my part, I fancy, but I hope to do the state some service before I am called to die for it."

André could not repress a movement of admiration toward this stern, rugged patriot. If he were stern, fierce, cruel toward others, he was not less so toward himself, it was evident.

Here, however, La Bussière gave an unexpected turn to the conversation by exclaiming suddenly:

"It seems, if my nose is to be trusted, you are going to have a veritable Lucullus feast here by-and-bye; ah——" with a long sniff of the purest enjoyment—"what a delicious smell emanates from the kitchen. Citizeness Babet, I should imagine, has reason to be vain of her culinary skill. A potage is at this moment being prepared—a potage unparalleled in excellence. I can swear to it."

"Is it the potage or Thorel he has smelt out with that Jacobin nose of his?" thought Pluche, uneasily, but he added, as calmly as possible: "Perhaps as you find the smell of the soup so appetising, Citizen, you will not object to stay and taste it with us."

"With the greatest pleasure," returned the other. "You see, Pluche, that Citizeness Babet's fame as a cook is well known to all of us in the quarter."

"Confound him," thought the master of the house, "I wish the soup would poison him. You, too," he added, turning toward Verdier, "will also do us the honour of dining with us?"

The patriot answered coldly that pressing business at the Commune would, he thought, prevent his accepting the invitation, but La Bussière, interposing eagerly, exclaimed:

“Nonsense, Citizen Verdier, let the business of the Section wait awhile—man must eat——”

“Well, I will go see,” returned his colleague, “but,” fixing his eyes suspiciously on Thorel, “I will return in time for your dinner.” Then, turning towards André, he said, “Au revoir, Citizen—Citizen——”

“Larcenac,” returned the Girondin, calmly.

The tall, gaunt form of the Sectioner disappeared through the door, and Thorel and Pluche found themselves left with La Bussière on their hands, of whom they knew nothing, except that he was a follower of Verdier's, and had invited himself to dine with them. Oh, if Babet had only known what guests she was to have at dinner that day, how she would have over-salted, over-peppered her dishes and lost her reputation as a cook for ever!

CHAPTER XII.

CHARLES LA BUSSIÈRE.

LA BUSSIÈRE was one of the dandies of the Jacobin Club. He gave himself the air of looking upon the grim sights of the Terror with the scrutinising, impartial eyes with which he would have gazed upon an actor making his *début* in a tragedy. Still young, he had won fame as an actor. Before the Revolution he had been an officer and an aristocrat, becoming, however, very soon after its breaking out, a member of the Section and the *âme damnée* of Publicola Verdier. It was the Princess de Lamballe who had procured the brevet of lieutenant for him.

Yet, before the first portents of the Revolution appeared on the country's skies, he had quitted the court to become the manager of a theatre. His acting created a furor in Paris. On the outbreak of the Revolution, he quitted the stage and was made clerk of the Records of the Section over which Publicola Verdier presided.

Nicholas Pluche had no doubt at all left in his mind but that he had accompanied Verdier to his dwelling to denounce and arrest Thorel.

"Poor Citizen Thorel—Poor Viscount Puyjoli! How danger dogs their footsteps," he sighed, quite forgetting that by sheltering "*suspects*" he was himself in as great peril as they.

Hardly had Verdier quitted the room when La Bussière exclaimed, laughingly:

“I know why Citizen Verdier is in such haste to return to the Section.”

“Why?”

“Because his adversary, Citizen Laroque, is to speak there.”

“What has made Laroque the adversary of Publicola Verdier?”

“What, you do not know—you are not aware, then, that Citizen Verdier has had his marital troubles?”

Pluche could not resist glancing at Thorel, who had grown pale at La Bussière’s last words.

“I live,” the visitor went on, carelessly, “directly opposite you. I inhabit a little room under the roof there, and I have for a neighbour a woman who makes me—makes me, you understand—believe in angels.

“A woman—there?” asked Thorel, eagerly.

“Yes, there at the window. You can see her.”

“Who is this woman?”

“A seamstress, a lace-mender; a beautiful woman, and honest, strange to say. The other night, Verdier’s child, a little creature of five, was taken sick suddenly. The father was quite beside himself with anxiety. We men, you know, are awkward nurses. Our neighbour was awakened by the noise in the next room and the moans of a child. She got up, dressed herself and came in. She remained all night at the bedside of the little one, caring for him as a mother might have done, and she has taken him under her charge ever since.”

“What is the name of this woman?” inquired André.

“Thérèse Barbier.”

“Ah!” he exclaimed, in a tone which betrayed disappointment.

“A woman like her will never deceive and desert—when she marries—her husband, as Publicola’s wife has done.”

“Publicola’s wife deceived, deserted him!” inquired Pluche, astonished.

“About two years ago, it is now, that Cornelia—her name is Cornelia—left him to go and live with his opponent in the Section, Laroque. Ever since then Citizen Laroque has quarrelled with Verdier at the Section. It is in that way he thanks him for his wife,” continued La Bussière, laughing. “Poor Verdier is to be pitied,” he added. “He was really very fond of his wife. In fact, he worshipped her.”

While La Bussière was speaking, the door leading from the cellar was opened gently and Pluche, looking in that direction saw, to his horror, the fresh, laughing, handsome face of a young man appear at it. This really beautiful and aristocratic countenance was surmounted by a horrible wig of red, tangled hair, drawn down low upon the forehead; upon the wig a torn, shabby, three-cornered hat of felt was set jauntily.

The bright, laughing eyes of the new-comer glanced half-mischievously, half-deprecatingly, towards the master of the house, asking permission to enter the room. Pluche made a furtive but emphatic gesture in the negative. Just then, however, La Bussière, whose ears were quick, hearing the slight noise made by the opening of the door, turned round suddenly, exclaiming:

“Hold!—whom have we here?”

“The stud-groom,” thought André to himself, with a glance at the new-comer.

"You have not yet told us who it is," began La Bussière again, looking suspiciously at Nicholas. The prompter smiled calmly. "The citizen spoke a short time ago of having observed some new faces in my humble domicile. Well, this is one of them, the second one. Allow me to introduce to you Citizen Martial Plantade, stud groom at Pompadour at Limousin."

At the first word uttered by Pluche, the stranger stepped over the threshold of the door, and, drawing himself up to his full height, calmly confronted Thorel and La Bussière. In every movement of this pretended groom there was an air of grace and elegance not at all in keeping with a torn and shabby riding-coat of a dirty coffee-colour.

La Bussière laughed scornfully at the unlucky name Pompadour.

"Hum!" he ejaculated, "Pompadour—the name is certainly an old-fashioned one."

"It might be changed to please you," replied the new-comer, with calm politeness quite incongruous with his attire.

"You," continued La Bussière, "are in the employ of the Nation, a groom of the stud at Pompadour?"

"Yes, Cit-cit-citizen, at your service," he stammered, perceptibly in pronouncing the word citizen. La Bussière set him down carelessly for tongue-tied.

"Ha," he answered, "all the couriers I can boast of are those furnished me by Dame Nature," he slapped his legs as he spoke. Suddenly perceiving a collection of arms hanging on the wall opposite him, he exclaimed,

"What have you there—swords? Citizen Verdier will probably report you to the Commune for keeping an armory in your dwelling."

“Oh,” returned the prompter. “Those weapons are not at all dangerous—a few stage swords and daggers—a present from Citizen Fleury.”

“As to their not being dangerous, I cannot answer for that. I once fought a duel with tin swords and succeeded in killing my antagonist.”

The groom of the stud raised his eyebrows scornfully at this boast of the comedian.

Citizen Pluche, who admired La Bussière exceedingly as an actor, would have, for all that, given all he possessed to see him out of his house now. He trembled at what *contretemps* might happen, now that Puyjoli had joined the party.

On pretext of speaking on business to Thorel, he took him apart into a small room fitted up as a library, adjoining the dining-room, and, pushing an encyclopedia toward him said:—

“You had better read up a little what it says here about oils. I am afraid you could not pass an examination on the subject.”

Then, having succeeded in separating the Girondin and Puyjoli, he hurried back to the dining-room to see how he and the Jacobin were getting on together. He was astonished to find Puyjoli alone there.

“You are looking for the gentleman who was here a moment ago? he has just gone into the kitchen to give your wife some advice about dinner. He pretends to be a second Vatel in his knowledge of the science of cooking. I hope you are not jealous. I do not think you need be.”

“Of Babet?” returned Nicholas, smiling, “hardly. But now that we have a moment alone together, do listen to a word or two of advice. Why in the name

of all that is sensible did you make your appearance on the stage before being called? You are mad, Viscount—positively mad.”

“Now,” returned Puyjoli, “where is the danger? Look at me and confess you would never have recognised me.”

“No,” returned Pluche, examining him judicially, “I certainly should not. You grimace almost as well as La Bussière himself. You are a born actor.”

“Upon my word I believe so. I think I could give my coachman himself points on horses, if I still had one, but my coachman, he is now a member of the Commune!” And Puyjoli burst into a clear, ringing laugh.

“I have one more thing to tell you. You are not to speak of politics. Take care also not to scoff at the powers that be. Silence—absolute silence on that point. You have given your promise on that, however little you value *your* life.”

“But, parbleu—I *do* value it!” Puyjoli exclaimed, swinging his hat, with a great tri-colour worsted cockade gaily around his head. “I have Sophie to console, and,” here he dropped his voice so low that Pluche could not distinguish what he was saying, “and Mademoiselle de Louverchal to conquer, and,” raising his voice again, “Paris to wander about again—Paris, my Paradise.”

“At present, Citizen Viscount,” returned Pluche, drily, “all of Paris you can have will be this humble dwelling, your hiding-place.”

“I know, I know, Pluche, and I will do nothing to endanger your safety, my kind, brave old friend, be assured of that.”

“Hush, hush,” returned Pluche, warningly, with a gesture in the direction of the kitchen.

Puyjoli went on, however, speaking gaily, though in a low voice.

"Think of it, Pluche, before coming here, I passed three days in a wardrobe, where I could not turn without barking my shins. With you, I have been stowed away in a cellar, whence I emerge covered with mould, which, though admirable on a bottle, is horrible on a riding-coat, as you perceive. Still I am in Paris, and that thought is a consolation in itself."

At that moment they heard a hoarse voice crying aloud in the street a list of names.

"It is the *crier*! Your name is probably in the list of the 'suspects'."

"And what if it is?" returned the other, laughing. "It only proves that I have not been forgotten by the world outside. Really, I am quite flattered."

"Silence. Will you never be serious?"

"Serious,—why should I be? Your oil-merchant from the Provinces is serious enough for both of us."

"Citizen Larcenac? He is a furious Republican. For Heaven's sake, do not get into a discussion with him."

"Indeed, I will be prudent, Pluche. I tell you I want to live."

"I should think so, at your age."

"I wish to live for a woman, a woman I love, and shall perhaps never see again, and for my brother, of whose fate I am quite ignorant."

"Your brother?"

"Yes, my brother, Gérard de Monpazier, the kindest, the best of brothers. He risked his head to come here to Paris just to see me." Here Puyjoli rapidly related the incident of Monpazier's coming to him and leaving him afterward to seek shelter with André Thorel.

“With Thorel?”

“Yes. He and my brother were friends at school together. God knows how I will love that Girondin, if it is to him that my poor Gérard owes his safety.”

Nicholas Pluche, enchanted, could hardly believe his ears. Thorel the friend of Puyjoli's brother! It was like a scene in a comedy. For a moment he was tempted to tell the Viscount that the pretended oil-merchant was Thorel himself. He decided, however, to wait until La Bussière should have taken his departure. Rubbing his hands gaily, he exclaimed instead:

“As there seems no sign of dinner just at present, I think I'll be off to the theatre. Some of the company are sick. There will probably be some changes made in consequence. I will fly thither, and be with you again as soon as possible. I leave you and Larcenac to entertain each other. Do not forget your rôle, but endeavour to do credit to my coaching. *Au revoir.*”

He hurried into the adjoining room where Thorel still sat languidly turning over the leaves of the encyclopedia. Bending over him, Pluche whispered into his ear mysteriously:

“Be prudent.”

Thorel smiled. “Your groom of the stud is a Jacobin, probably.”

“A ferocious one. But, above all things, be on your guard with La Bussière.” As he opened the street-door, the voice of the crier crying loudly in the street, was heard plainly:

“Here you are—full and complete list! Only two souls!”

“Oh,” exclaimed Puyjoli irritably, “we are not at all deaf yet. Our friend the crier might moderate his

voice a little." He glanced at the reflection of his face and figure in a mirror opposite. "How Sophie would laugh to see me tricked out in this way. A pupil of master Pluche. Well, I fancy I am not the only one here in the house to-day. That Monsieur Tartenac—Partinac—Cardinac—that oil-merchant from the Provinces is another, I'll wager. And the oil-merchant and the groom must entertain each other. I like him, however, a thousand times better than that dandy Jacobin and Red Republican, La Bussière." He walked up to the window as he spoke, and stood there, gazing out absently. Suddenly he caught sight of a female figure sitting at the garret window opposite, and exclaimed wonderingly:

"Upon my soul, I think I know that face. It is certainly Clotilde Ponyade, or I am losing my eyesight."

Just then Thorel entered the room. Puyjoli, whose back was toward him, who still continued to gaze fixedly out of the window, was quite unaware of his presence.

"What can he be looking at," thought Thorel, jealously, and, approaching the window, he exclaimed abruptly,

"Citizen."

"Eh—what?" exclaimed the Viscount, turning abruptly, and looking at him haughtily. Then, recollecting himself, he bowed to Thorel.

"Mons—Citizen!" He pronounced the word "citizen" with the same difficulty as before.

"I see," continued the other, "that the scenes in the street outside interest you, Citizen."

"Everything in Paris interests me," replied Puyjoli gaily.

"When one has but newly arrived in Paris," continued André, not forgetting to use the southern accent in speaking——

"Like you," interrupted Puyjoli.

"Like you and me, we find everything in Paris interesting. The women, the citizens, the horses——"

"Oh, the horses!" returned Puyjoli, disdainfully.

"You do not seem to care about the horses. I imagine you are not in love with your occupation."

"And you—probably detest the oil trade."

"Quite so."

"Nicholas Pluche informed me that you were in business at Aix?" inquired the stud-groom.

"At Aix."

"City where Parliament sits. Pretty women there, too. I had an uncle, a former President of the Parliament——"

"An uncle—President!" exclaimed Thorel, astonished.

"Puyjoli corrected himself quickly enough.

"When I say uncle I mean a patron. I sold him a magnificent—chestnut—yes, it was a chestnut I sold him, I remember."

André listened absently. Suddenly he asked abruptly,

"What were you looking at so intently?"

"I?" returned Puyjoli. "Oh, at nothing. A woman opposite."

"Really," replied the other, this time forgetting the southern accent, "a woman?"

"Less even than that—the shadow of a woman."

"At the house opposite?"

"Yes."

“Do you know her?”

“Know her? How should I know her? Do *you* know her, citizen?”

André hesitated a moment, and then answered with difficulty,

“No, I do not know her.”

“Well,” returned Puyjoli, “to tell you the truth I thought I detected in her——”

“A resemblance to somebody you know?” inquired André hoarsely.

“Hardly a resemblance; but she makes me think of some one I knew formerly.” Puyjoli had in speaking, involuntarily dropped the light, rallying tone he had hitherto employed in speaking with Thorel. “A memory of far-off Limousin,” he added, to turn suspicion. “But, after all, Citizen, when one looks up at the sky, at the first glance all the stars seem alike to him.”

“A resemblance, a recollection of some one he once knew,” thought André, uneasily; “who is this man, I wonder.”

All this time the Viscount, extremely annoyed at André’s pertinacity, was devoting him to the furies.

“Here is a man from the Provinces, who drops his accent and takes it up again when it suits him. Confound him! Poor Clotilde! Does any danger threaten her from this quarter, I wonder?”

Babet now entered the room, looking rather annoyed, and followed by La Bussière, smiling and rattling on as usual. At that very moment, as if in response to a summons, Pluche himself came home again. With him, out of breath and perspiring, his friend, Maximilian Médard.

“Well,” whispered Nicholas to his wife, taking ad-

vantage of a moment when the attention of the others was attracted elsewhere, "here we have our two guests together."

Babet made no answer. She had her eyes fixed in a terror-stricken gaze on La Bussière, who, standing against the wall with his hands thrust deep down in his pockets, appeared to be taking an inventory of everything in the room. Friend Maximilian was smiling and bowing in turn to the three strangers, mopping his face as he did so with a handkerchief having a tri-coloured border.

Pluche drew his wife up to Puyjoli, and, speaking so every one could hear him, exclaimed,

"My dear Babet, let me introduce to you my young friend, Martial, whose arrival we have been expecting for a week past."

Puyjoli bowed deeply.

"Mad——;" he corrected himself slowly, "Citizeness, I am charmed to make your acquaintance."

"Well?" inquired Pluche, drawing the Viscount aside, and glancing in the direction of Thorel.

"Oh, we are the best friends in the world."

"Good."

Then, going up to Thorel in his turn, he whispered, "You did not forget your rôle, I trust?"

"No, no," returned the other, absently; "I have studied your encyclopedia so well that I could pass an examination in all the oils of France and Italy."

He, Nicholas noticed, however, hardly took his eyes off Puyjoli.

"They have quite fallen in love with each other," thought the worthy prompter, delighted.

"Well, well, Babet," he exclaimed, rubbing his hands

gleefully, "is not it time that the table was set for dinner? Citizen La Bussière must be dying with hunger."

"I have, I must confess, an appetite," replied the other, smiling.

"We are expecting another guest," Pluche continued, Citizen *Verdier*." He laid a stress on the name, as a warning to Thorel and Puyjoli.

"He will be here in time. He is always punctual. A man exact—rigid, in fact—in the performance of the slightest duty. A man whose word is law—a true patriot."

Gaston's upper lip curled sarcastically at this eulogy of the Red Republican. Fortunately, however, La Bussière was not at that moment looking in his direction.

CHAPTER XIII.

CLOTILDE.

"I, too, am dying of hunger," exclaimed Maximilian Médard, "and of thirst also. How hot it is! Shall not I help you set the table, Citizeness Babet?"

"No, thank you, Médard, I shall be done in a moment." She broke off suddenly, her face turning as white as the tablecloth she held in her hand at the sound of uproar in the street outside.

"What can be the matter!" exclaimed Pluche.

"Oh," returned La Bussière, "there seems to be a tumult outside."

Médard trotted up to the door, and opening it slightly, peered out.

"There is a woman running—a young woman pursued by a crowd—yes, upon my word, pursued——"

Gaston stepped up quickly to the door, and stood there, looking out over the little man's head.

La Bussière ran to the window.

"She is coming in this direction!"

At that very moment a young woman dressed as a seamstress came flying through the little garden up toward the door which Puyjoli held open for her.

At sight of the new-comer, André turned livid. He had recognised his wife under her disguise. Puyjoli, also, was filled with consternation.

"The poor child is going to faint!" exclaimed Babet, putting her arm around the young woman's waist and placing her gently in a chair. "Pluche—Citizen Médard—some water!"

Médard flew for a tumbler of water, which Pluche held to her lips.

"Drink, Citizeness, you are safe here."

"Those men are no longer there?" whispered Clotilde, trembling, fearing to betray herself before Médard, who was a stranger to her.

"What men?" inquired Babet. "The men outside the door? Citizen La Bussière has gone out to speak to them. I hope he is not going to bring them in here with him."

"He seems rather to have succeeded in sending them off," returned Médard, who had returned to his post at the door. "Look! they are going away."

"Yes," answered Thorel, "they are going away, and quietly!"

A ray of joy lightened the eyes and fired the pale cheeks of the woman at the sound of Thorel's voice. She gazed rapturously in his direction, but he had turned his back on her.

"What was the reason of the crowd's pursuing you, Citizeness?" inquired Pluche of her.

"I had gone out as usual to take some work back."

"Was not that you who, a short time before, were seated at the window opposite?" inquired Puyjoli.

She nodded slightly, and continued:

"As I was passing by the railing of the garden of the Luxembourg, I perceived that I was followed by a crowd of men and women. Had I drawn attention upon myself by an unwary word or gesture? I do not know. I felt instinctively, however,

that I had in some way unconsciously excited the animosity of the persons surrounding me. I began to walk faster. They followed me. I broke at last into a run. My pursuers quickened their pace, too, and kept up with me. Fortunately at the crossing at the corner of the Rue Hauteville, a press of vehicles and foot passengers enabled me to elude the eyes of the most of them, but there were still some who kept doggedly at my heels until I succeeded in reaching your door. How thankful I am to you for the shelter which came just in time. But, as my presence will probably be dangerous to you——” She rose from her chair and took a step towards the door.

“Of what are you thinking, my dear child?” exclaimed Nicholas. “As if we should listen for a moment to your leaving us now. You might be attacked again.”

“Charles La Bussière now entered the room.

“There is no longer any danger. You have no idea how eloquent I was. The blackguards have gone. You will be quite safe, Citizeness.”

“You here, Citizen La Bussière!” exclaimed Clotilde.

“At your service, my fair neighbour.”

André stood there, listening angrily; the fingers of his right hand clutched the back of his chair. Again, as in that night of the 2nd of June, the recollection of her voice speaking in terms of endearment to her lover concealed in the pavilion, returned to him. Had they by any chance found themselves alone together, André’s first words to his wife would have been those of anger and contempt.

Clotilde’s sensations, on the contrary, were those of rapturous, unalloyed happiness at finding herself beneath the same roof with her adored husband. She

felt an imperious desire to ask Pluche to find her an opportunity for her to exchange a word—but one word, in private with André.

“I beg you,” she said in a whisper to Pluche, who found himself near her, “to take these men away. I must speak a word to you.”

“You?”

“I implore you.”

“Do not you think,” inquired Pluche of his guests, that while dinner is getting ready, you would find it pleasanter in the garden? Besides, the Citizeness would probably recover more quickly from her fright if we left her and my wife alone together.”

The men agreed willingly. La Bussière had attached himself to Médard, and the two were deep in a discussion on music.

“When the three were alone together, Clotilde exclaimed:

“I did not know, Citizen Pluche, until now, that you had given refuge to two fugitives.”

“Merciful Heaven!” exclaimed Babet. “You know, then?”

“That André Thorel’s companion in misery is the Viscount de Puyjoli.”

“Citizeness, Citizeness, in the name of Heaven, do not speak so loud,” begged Babet.

“You quite mistake, Citizeness,” returned Pluche blandly, “the person of whom you speak is Citizen Martial Plantade, stud-groom from the provinces.”

“You have nothing to fear from me, Citizen Pluche. I know Monsieur de Puyjoli, and I would do as much as you, did it lie in my power, to shield and defend him. He is the friend of my childhood,—he——”

"Then he is acquainted with Citizen Thorel also?"

"No," returned Clotilde. "It is, after all, not necessary that they should become acquainted at present with each other. I learned only to-day that the spies of the Convention are on my husband's track. I had gone to visit one of the members who said to me, 'Take care of yourself, Citizeness. You are wrong to remind us daily that you are the wife of the Girondin, Thorel, the friend of traitors and the accomplice of rebels.'"

"The devil!" exclaimed Pluche, "the Convention, it seems, has begun to arrest women. Citizeness Roland has been thrown into prison for no other reason, it appears, than that her husband has so far been able to elude his pursuers."

"Well, Citizen Pluche," returned Clotilde, earnestly, "as at any moment I may be denounced and thrown into prison, I implore you to allow me five minutes alone with my husband. Only five minutes, and when I have spoken with him, I will go away and never trouble you again."

"Citizeness Thorel," returned Pluche quickly, "the little room next this one is at your service."

"Well, well!" ejaculated Babet, "three 'suspects' at once in the house. Oh, what will become of us, I wonder?"

"Dear, brave Citizen Pluche," cried Clotilde, seizing his hand and raising it to her lips in spite of his efforts to prevent her, "how good, how kind you are to everybody."

"It is only a habit I have got into," he returned with a shrug of his shoulders. "I have grown tired of reading the daily list of the guillotined. It has grown too confoundedly long of late."

VOLUME SECOND.

THE NINTH OF THERMIDOR.

CHAPTER I.

THE DINNER AT CITIZEN PLUCHE'S.

FROM the day when she had hired a lodging in the house directly opposite Nicholas Pluche, Clotilde had longed for an opportunity for an interview with her husband. His persistent refusal to allow her to come to him, his neglect to send her even a line, had filled her heart with alarm and grief.

She could find no reason at all for his strangely unkind treatment of her. She had now lived hidden away for some weeks in the old dwelling, happy when by any chance she caught a glimpse of her husband's pale face at the window opposite.

Citizeness Barbier, the porter observed with pleasure, saw nobody, rarely exchanged a word with the other lodgers, but passed her days working diligently at her needle.

Her pale face and sad air caused the porter to observe one day to La Bussière, who had come in to chat with him in his den, that the new lodger, "would never make old bones."

“Bah, Citizen,” returned the other, “do not you know that it is the frail pots which last the longest?”

It was a pleasure for La Bussière to have an opportunity to speak of Citizeness Barbier. Her air of suffering and resignation, her silence and reserve, served only to render her more interesting in his eyes.

She, on her part, knowing him to be an employee of the Committee of Public Safety, quaked with fear if he only passed her on the staircase.

In the house, Clotilde knew no one except La Bussière. Though she had come to the assistance of Verdier's child, he, distracted with grief and terror at the sudden sickness of the little one, had accepted her services mechanically and without noticing or charging his memory in any way with her appearance. Clotilde on her part, had been filled with aversion and horror at contact with Verdier. He was in her eyes the embodiment of danger to her beloved husband. She had watched his visit to Pluche's house that morning with dismay, imagining that it would probably prove an ominous one to the fugitive hidden there. Now, finding herself beneath the same roof with her husband, quite by accident, she could hardly realize what had happened.

André disguised—Puyjoli in motley attire—both guests of the prompter! It made her head reel. The loud voice of the crier, crying aloud the list of “suspects” was, however, a proof to Clotilde that she was awake.

She glanced at Pluche—Pluche, who, by opening his doors to these denounced and suspected persons, had put his own head in danger. The worthy prompter, however, seemed troubled with no ominous forebodings.

On Babet's entering the dining-room with a smoking

tureen of soup, he made haste to call his guests to the table. After they were seated, Puyjoli, finding himself next to Clotilde, whispered :

“ My dear Clotilde, how happy I am to see you here. And your husband, a fugitive like me, I understand ; I hope, however, he is in safety.”

“ Hush,” returned Clotilde, knowing André’s eyes were fixed on her. “ If Pluche’s guest opposite us should notice our speaking so confidentially, it might cause him to be suspicious of us.”

“ You are quite right, Citizeness Babet, not to wait for the laggard Publicola,” La Bussière was heard exclaiming gaily. “ A man who comes late to such a dinner is unworthy of any consideration whatever.”

“ May the devil have flown away with Citizen Verdier,” Puyjoli muttered under his breath, when just then Publicola made his appearance.

“ Well,” exclaimed Nicholas, forcing a smile, “ dinner is waiting for you, Citizen Verdier.”

“ The potage would have been burned in another moment,” Babet added.

Publicola bowed rigidly to Citizens Plantade and Larcenac. Perceiving Clotilde, he inquired harshly,

“ Who is that ? ”

“ *That ?* ” returned Puyjoli, looking haughtily at him.

“ Yes,” returned Verdier, “ you gave me no reason to expect I should find another guest here, Citizen Pluche, when you invited me this morning.” Then, turning to Puyjoli, he inquired abruptly, “ the citizeness is your wife ? ”

“ No,” answered the Viscount, briefly.

“ I assure you,” the prompter interposed here, “ the citizeness is a friend of ours—an intimate friend. She

lodges opposite in the same house with you." He stopped abruptly, remembering that he did not know under what name Clotilde was living there.

Clotilde arose from her chair and went bravely up to Publicola.

"I am Citizeness Thérèse Barbier, and a fellow-lodger of yours, Citizen Verdier."

A fellow-lodger of mine!" exclaimed Verdier, astonished.

"Of ours," interposed La Bussière.

"Yes. Have you never noticed me?"

"I never notice women," returned Verdier, brutally.

He examined her now closely, however, struck visibly with the contrast between her delicate beauty and distinguished bearing and her garb of a washing-woman.

"Pretty," he murmured, "and her hands. Let me look at your hands," he said imperiously.

André Thorel involuntarily made a movement to place himself between Clotilde and her persecutor. Nicholas drew him back quickly.

"They are white,—your hands," he continued, gazing down at them, "white and small. They have never done much work—those hands of yours."

"Enough to enable me to earn my own living by them," she returned, smiling sadly.

"You have a trade?"

"Yes, Citizen, I am a lace-mender."

"A lace-mender! Your occupation is quite an aristocratic one."

"Ah," exclaimed La Bussière, "that is the reason, probably, that Citizeness Barbier's hands bear no marks of the needle. She has very little work to do, most likely, her patrons having all left the country."

“That is probably the reason,” Nicholas Pluche interposed, with a feeling of gratitude toward La Bussière, for coming to Clotilde’s rescue.

Publicola, still continuing to keep his eyes fixed on her, now perceived a ring on the third finger of her left hand, and asked abruptly :

“Are you married?”

“I am a widow,” answered Clotilde, with a glance in André’s direction, who grew pale as death at her words.

“Let me look at that ring,” Publicola commanded, holding out his great, bony hand toward her.

Clotilde hesitated.

“But Citizen——”

“Upon my word!” Puyjoli exclaimed impatiently, while André gnawed his lips till the blood came.

Verdier had, however, removed the ring from the finger of the reluctant Clotilde. The ring was a wedding-ring, formed of two small rings fastened together. He opened it, and looked closely at something which was engraved inside.

“Ah,” he returned after a pause, “you have just told me that your name is Thérèse Barbier.”

“Yes.”

“But the names written in here?”

“The names?”

“Yes, the names. You know very well there is no such name as Thérèse here,” and he read aloud the names written within, “André—Clotilde.”

André could contain himself no longer. Going up to the Jacobin, he took the ring quickly out of his hands, saying as he did so ;

“Is not it quite probable that the ring may not be the

property of her who is now wearing it, or may not have been a gift to her or an heirloom? Could not it have been her mother's? Have you yourself never worn a ring which you cherished as a souvenir of some friend or relation?"

"Fine words, Citizen," returned Publicola, "but as the date inside the ring is 1791, it could not be an heirloom or even her mother's wedding-ring. The Citizeness is young, but she is certainly more than three years old."

"This date is it necessary that it should mark a day of joy? May not it possibly recall a day of sorrow—of mourning?" answered André, handing the ring back to his wife.

Publicola shrugged his lean shoulders under his carmagnoles, and continued in his metallic tones:

"Possibly, but Thérèse or Clotilde, whichever you may call yourself, have a care; there are in Paris, female Federalists as well as male ones, and as the Republic will be lost on the day when Bugot and his friends are triumphant, I shall keep a sharp eye on all Girondins and Federalists, male and female."

"You will not have far to seek me when you desire to arrest me," returned Clotilde, throwing back her head proudly, "I live in the same house with you."

"For a very short time, then," he returned.

"Since that day when your child fell sick and I came to his bedside to nurse him."

Upon the cold, stern visage of the man a sudden change appeared.

"What! It was you who came to nurse him? The little one has ever since urged me daily to go in search

of you that I might thank you. Well,—I do thank you. Let your name be Clotilde, Thérèse—what you will—I do thank you from my heart, I thank you for all your kindness to my child—my forsaken, motherless child,” and as he spoke he held out his hand to her.

Nicholas Pluche, delighted at the happy turn of things, now exclaimed impatiently,

“Come—come to dinner. Everything will be stone cold.”

“You are right,” cried La Bussière, gaily ; “now we can change the conversation, fortunately. Rings—mothers—children ; it is as touching as one of Mercier’s melodramas, but I, for my part, abhor melodrama. Citizeness Barbier, will you take your seat again at the table?”

Hardly had the company re-seated themselves, when the rolling of drums, coming every moment nearer, disturbed them again.

“The devil take those drums ! We must be off to the Section again, I suppose, eh, Verdier ?” exclaimed La Bussière, impatiently.

“If duty calls you, citizens,” began Nicholas, visibly relieved at the prospect of being rid of his unwelcome guests.

“Duty calls me, perhaps,” returned La Bussière, plunging his spoon into his soup, “but I shall first give ear to the call of hunger. Excellent potage—yours—Citizeness. Delicious, indeed.”

“Have some more ?” asked Babet.

“Ah, yes, if you please. I must acknowledge your soup will spoil the enjoyment of my black broth for days to come.”

"Black broth," returned Puyjoli, scornfully; "is that the prescribed diet of a patriot?"

While speaking he had been gazing down absently at his plate. Suddenly he exclaimed, brusquely,

"What is this—what is this?"

"What?"

"This picture on this plate here."

Nicholas returned quickly,

"That? Oh, that is a picture of the destruction of the Bastille."

"The destruction?"

"Of the Bastille. And that is Thuriot, urging on the people."

"The Bastille—Thuriot—it is impossible for me," exclaimed the pretended stud-groom, "to eat off a plate like this."

"You object to put such a work of art to such a humble usage? Babet, bring another," Nicholas interposed quickly. But, with a flick of his sleeve, the Viscount had already thrown the plate from the table, breaking it in pieces. Nicholas stooped quickly to pick it up. La Bussière examined Puyjoli, and Verdier remarked in his deep, hollow voice:

"Is it possible that the representation of the first triumph of the French people over their oppressors can displease you, citizen?"

"Nicholas, however, made haste to reply, having picked up the pieces of porcelain carefully, and put them one side. "It was a mere accident, Citizen Verdier, of Citizen Martial's. He knocked off the plate with his coat-cuff; I saw him, and indeed I cannot find fault with him, as I myself break a great deal of china in the course of a year, do not I, Babet?"

"You do indeed, my friend," was the answer.—"But there are some breakages which cost the breaker dear," interposed Publicola, who seemed every moment to grow more and more suspicious of Puyjoli.

"Cost me dear!" returned the prompter quickly. "This one will cost me the price of a new plate, probably." Then, drawing up his chair closer to the table, he went on gaily: "My friends, the theatre will open in an hour. I would advise you to make haste with your dinner."

"And your appetite, Citizen La Bussière?" inquired Babet in her turn.

"Still good, in spite of the effort made just now to spoil it," returned the other, glancing askance at the Viscount.

"Efforts to spoil it!" returned Nicholas, laughing. "You must have a poor appetite indeed, if the breaking of a plate will spoil it. Come, think no more of it, and if you like, my friend Médard—Maximilian Médard,"—with a stress on the first name, "and I will give you a duet from Orpheus."

At this word music, La Bussière, enchanted, dropping the morsel of beef from his fork, exclaimed:

"Bravo! Music! I adore music. If I had not, unfortunately, turned my attention to politics, I think I might have become a singer like Lays himself. Listen!" Then, raising his glass above his curly head, and gazing ecstatically up at the ceiling, he began singing in clear, sonorous tones—

"Do you know what we have done?

What we have done?

What we have done?

But just the other day.

We've made the nobles run,
We've made the traitors run,
And oh, but it was fun—
So fast they sped away!

We've made them pack,
They won't come back,
With baron, marquis, count, and countess, too,
Hurrah! We'll have no more to do,
For this is what we've done.
We've made them run,
We've made them pack,
They won't come back—
And this is what we've done.
Hurray—Hurray—Hurray!"

Verdier listened frowning. "I prefer the Declaration of Rights and Hymns to Freedom to such light ditties as these," he said, solemnly.

Gaston de Puyjoli's face was scarlet under his periwig. He bit his lips till the blood came.

But La Bussière was now quite unconscious of his surroundings. Waving his glass above his head, he burst out again:

"We'll have the tyrants back again
When?
When stars fall from the skies like rain.
Then!"

Here, however, Citizen Médard interrupted him by observing in his calm, simple way, that these songs, patriotic as their sentiments undoubtedly were, were musically of no value; on the contrary, they were displeasing to the ear of a musician, especially to a musician accustomed to the sublime melodies of Glück.

"Of whom?"

"Of Glück."

"Glück—that is a German name,"

“It is the name of a divine, an immortal genius,” returned the other, hotly. Then, puckering up his old, withered lips as though he were sucking a sugar-plum, in a high falsetto voice, he sang :

“ Here, within this place so blest
The weary soul may rest,
In this quiet, sheltered spot,
Care and sorrow enter not.”

Publicola had ceased to listen to what was going on around him. La Bussière was staring in amazement at Médard, and Clotilde, seeing the attention distracted of the two persons inimical to her husband, endeavoured, but in vain, to catch her husband's eye. André persistently ignored all her attempts to attract his notice.

Suddenly a violent knocking at the door disturbed the company. Upon the threshold of the door, which Nicholas had opened, stood a red-capped man, a member of the Section, at sight of whom Verdier arose promptly.

“Citizen Verdier.”

“At your service, Citizen Aristides.”

“You are summoned to the Section—you and Citizen La Bussière. The sitting is ‘*en permanence*.’ I have been sent to fetch you, Citizen President. At your lodgings, where I went first, they sent me here.

“Bah,” returned La Bussière, laughing, “what was the Vice-President doing then ? I thought vice-presidents were instituted for the sole and only purpose that the presidents might have the opportunity to dine in peace.”

Publicola frowned, glancing warningly at his colleague. The other was quick enough to comprehend. He rose, saying :

“I was only jesting. Shall I go with you ?”

"If you please."

"At least stay and finish your dinner, Citizens," said Babet, hospitably.

"The dinner——" already began La Bussière, irresolutely.

"The Section awaits you, Citizen," repeated Citizen Aristides, impressively.

"I am coming," answered Verdier.

"Capua shall not make me forget Carthage," returned La Bussière, preparing to take his departure. He swallowed a parting glass of wine, and then, stooping down, he whispered in his host's ear, glancing at the same time, in the direction of Puyjoli and Thorel:

"Your two guests; you understand me, Pluche, when I tell you that they are both miserable actors, and deserve to be hissed off the stage for not rendering their rôles better."

He laughed, but his laugh caused Nicholas much uneasiness. Had La Bussière his suspicions that his guests were not what they appeared? If so, he would undoubtedly confide those suspicions of his to his chief.

"I do not understand you," stammered the prompter.

"No? I did not think you were so obtuse." He hastened after Verdier, who had already left the house.

CHAPTER II.

GIRONDIN AND ROYALIST.

"THANK GOD!" exclaimed Babet, with a sigh of relief, when the door had closed upon the two Jacobins.

"At last!" her husband echoed her.

"Now," thought André, with a look towards Puyjoli, "I shall find out the name of that man there."

They continued their dinner, however, with renewed appetite.

"Duty before pleasure," said Pluche, quoting Verdier, with a smile. "I am thankful, however, that I was not the one who was called away from Babet's dinner by the Section, but——"

"Every Jack to his trade," returned Puyjoli, laughing.

André, very much nettled, answered him hotly, forgetting in his haste the southern accent.

"Your tone, in speaking of these patriots who govern the councils of the Nation might, it seems to me, be a little more respectful."

"I am sorry my tone is not to your taste," returned Puyjoli, scornfully, "but I really cannot change it to please you, Citizen."

"Have you no respect for the men who have given liberty to France?"

"Liberty! Ah, Liberty—listen! It is Liberty who cries aloud in the streets." And Puyjoli paused to allow the voice of the crier, crying the list of "sus-

pects " and denounced in the street outside, to be more distinctly heard.

"So be it," returned the Viscount.

"Speak of your business affairs. Talk of your oils, your horses."

"I am willing to wager that Citizen Martial's horses cause him very little trouble," exclaimed André.

"My horses—you are right. They have galloped away to the four winds of heaven. Not even one is left me to gallop away with out of France, if I should desire to do so."

"I quite believe you. Moreover, if I do not much mistake, you would rejoice to see the Duke of Brunswick's cavalry encamp on the Place de la Revolution; you could then recruit your stud from his, probably."

"So!" exclaimed Pujoli, "you will make haste to denounce me to your patriotic friends as——"

"Denounce! Denounce you!" exclaimed Thorel in a fury, "what the devil do you mean by that word, sir?"

"Sir," returned Pujoli, "your Republic is the guillotine."

"The Republic, it is Liberty—it is Law and Right."

"Thank you, you may keep your liberty. I will none of it. It is license. It is anarchy rather."

"Citizen," returned Thorel, rising angrily from his chair and approaching Pujoli, menacingly.

"*Citizen!*" returned the other, scornfully, not moving from his chair.

"They will have a crowd around the house directly," sighed Babet to herself.

"Have you lost your senses?" whispered Nicholas, leaning over Pujoli's chair.

"No, Pluche, but can I help it if your visitor from

the Provinces is so hasty? His oil, his oil; he has thrown it all into the fire!"

"If you were not a guest here I would——" continued Thorel excitedly, disregarding the frightened looks and gestures of his wife.

"At your service, Citizen. We can leave the house if you insist on it," and Puyjoli, resolute but smiling, looked up scornfully from the chair where he was seated, at his adversary.

They would, it seemed, probably have left the house directly, had not the voice of the public crier, just then passing by, resounded through the room—

"Here you are—a full and complete list of all suspected and accused persons. Their names, addresses and professions, compiled by the Committee of Public Safety. Only two sous!"

It was as if the heavy sound of a falling axe made itself suddenly audible in the very room they were in.

"Suspected—denounced," said Thorel in a hoarse whisper.

"It is the list he is calling," murmured the Viscount, half under his breath.

"Misery loves company," whispered Nicholas to his wife. "Fetch the coffee, Babet, we shall have no more trouble with them; besides, it is time I was off to the theatre. I have to prompt in a new play to-night."

"Ah, the playhouse!" exclaimed Puyjoli, laughing. "If you should see the fair Clerval, tell her from me that I throw at her feet——"

"What?"

"All my emoluments as groom of the stud."

"Poor Sophie! She won't be much the richer for them, I am afraid."

Coffee drunk, Nicholas began to get ready to go to the theatre. Médard was to accompany him. Before going, however, he thought it necessary to caution the Viscount once more in private.

“One word. Do try and play your part better. Any one not blind and deaf, would know you for an émigré at the first glance.”

“Ah, all the world cannot have the talent of Citizen Dugazon, you know, Pluche.”

“Patience,” implored the prompter of André, in his turn.

“Certainly it is needed.”

“For your sake—for mine.”

“It is only out of consideration for you, that I have refrained from throwing the royalist out of the window a half hour ago!”

“I fear,” Pluche could not resist saying, “you would not have found it as easy a task as you imagine. But have the kindness to remember that, though you are my friend, he is one also.”

Clotilde, profiting by the moment’s diversion, approached Puyjoli, exclaiming,

“I entreat you, Gaston, be silent. You will bring ruin down on the heads of us all. Do go away—leave the room,” she added, impatiently.

“I—I make way for this Jacobin! No, thank you, I am very comfortable where I am. Why should I go away?”

“I implore you, Gaston, leave us here a moment together. I wish to speak to him.”

“To him?”

“To him.”

“Why?”

"I wish to speak to him; I told you so before."

"Are you going to humble yourself before this man?"

"What is that to you? Go, Gaston. Leave us."

Puyjoli hesitated, but at an appealing glance from Clotilde, he rose slowly from his chair.

"Very well, for your sake, Clotilde, for your sake alone!" Then, in a sarcastic tone he added, "After all, I confess I prefer my damp cellar and solitude to the company in this room."

Left alone with her husband (Babet had also quitted the room at the moment Puyjoli descended the stairs leading to the cellar) Clotilde ran eagerly towards him, with outstretched arms, exclaiming,

"André—my André—how happy I am——" She stopped suddenly, as he made no reply.

"You repulse me. Why?"

"Have not I good reason to repulse you?"

"You wish to avoid me—you cannot endure the sight of me. Why?"

"Why! Infamous woman, do you dare to ask me *why*?"

Clotilde gazed at him, her lips white and quivering.

"I do—not—understand you," she stammered, "I—do—not understand your words—your looks—your treatment of me."

"You do not understand me? Very well, I will try and explain myself. Look me in the face;" and he caught her by the wrist as he spoke, "my heart was filled to overflowing with love for you and my country. By both objects of my affection, I have been deceived—betrayed."

"Betrayed by me—deceived? I do not understand,"

interrupted Clotilde. The unhappy woman could hardly believe her ears. Of what fault could her husband accuse her? She who lived only for him.

“André, my husband, are you mad? What is it of which you accuse me? Speak, and let me know how I have offended you.”

“Am I mad?” he repeated bitterly. “When I recall the scene of that fatal night I am tempted to wish I were. But no, alas, that consolation is denied me. I have endeavoured to doubt the evidence of my own senses rather than accuse you.”

“Accuse me? Now I insist on your telling me everything.”

“On the evening of the day when the decree of our arrest was promulgated in the Convention, though I knew I was endangering life and liberty by returning home, I could not resist doing so. I remembered that I had left you alone and in tears that morning, and I determined to risk my life for one word—one embrace. That night when I had returned, and was about to enter the house by way of the garden, you ran quickly by me. I followed you, and saw you knock at the door of the pavilion. It was opened by a man. You entered, and I, your husband, a hunted fugitive, heard as I stood outside in the darkness, words that convinced me of your guilt, your treachery. I heard you call him by his name, I heard you use words of endearment toward him, conjure him by a past—a common past.”

“Have you anything more to say?” inquired Clotilde, coldly, when he paused, too much moved to go on.

“More to say? Have not I said enough, and more than enough——”

“My poor André! Have you really believed, and

for so long a time, that your wife has been false to you, and that that man——”

“Was your lover,” he interrupted her furiously. “There can be no doubt of it.”

“Ah, by our life together, André, by that and our love, I assure you he was not. I love you—I have always loved you. Could I look you in the face as I do now, if I had not—if I had not always been faithful to you? André, kill me if you will, but do not doubt me.”

“Who was that man, then?”

“That man?”

“Yes.”

“A fugitive.”

“He, a fugitive?”

“A man suspected, denounced, in danger of losing his life as you yourself were.”

“His name?”

“I am not at liberty to tell you his name.”

“I heard you call him ‘Gaston.’ Tell me his name.”

“Have not I told you that I have promised not to reveal his name, even to you?”

“I do not believe you. Why should a man come to you for refuge, and yet forbid you to tell me his name?”

“He came to me for refuge, for a shelter, which I could not give him. He went away again almost immediately. As I could not give him the shelter he sought, the least I could do was to keep his name a secret, as he implored me to do.”

“That man was no fugitive. How can you expect me to believe you when you acknowledge you have a secret from me.”

“A secret from you?”

“Who is this man with whom you have such an intimate acquaintance that he comes to you to hide him when his head is in danger?”

“He was the friend, the playmate of my childhood.”

“Yet you have never mentioned his name to me.”

“Did not I? Ah, André, it was because since our marriage I have only thought of you. My childhood, my early girlhood, I had quite forgotten them. Now, however, I will tell you the name of the man with whom I spoke that night. He would now be the first to release me from my promise. It was Gaston de Puyjoli. I was a protégée of his grandmother’s. We grew up in the same house together. He is younger than I, but we were playmates. My father lost his life in saving Gaston’s brother’s, and after that I was brought up in the family; you knew that, André. You knew that I was the ward of Madame de Trémolat, who left me my dowry in her will. My only fault was that I did not tell you that I had met Puyjoli here in Paris one day. He asked me not to do so. He is a Royalist. You were a member of the Convention and he was not pleased to learn that I had married a Girondin. He would not have come to us if——”

“I do not believe you,” he interrupted her gloomily. I never can.”

Clotilde gazed mutely, despairingly, at her husband for a moment, then exclaiming,

“You do not believe me? Very well, I will hesitate no longer. If I deliver up this rival, this man of whom you are jealous, whom you hate, into your hands, you will no longer refuse to believe me, will you? Love me again, perhaps?”

“What is it you are saying?” stammered André,

aghast. He was afraid his wife might have gone mad suddenly.

"I say I am going to bring you face to face with this man, your rival as you call him."

"He is here?"

"He is here."

Opening the door through which Gaston had gone, she called aloud:

"Monsieur le Vicomte!"

"What are you doing?" exclaimed Thorel, astonished.

"I am going, as I promised, to bring you face to face with the man with whom I spoke in the pavilion on the last night of your sitting in the Convention."

When Puyjoli appeared in answer to her call, she addressed him;

"Monsieur le Vicomte, this is my husband, my dearly loved and honoured husband. On the night of the 2nd of June last he overheard some of our conversation in the pavilion in the garden. One word he heard has caused him much pain. He heard 'a common past,' alluded to. Will you assure him that this past referred only to our childish days, spent together in an old hôtel in Perigord? I do not ask you to defend me in any way to my husband. I simply ask you to corroborate me."

Gaston de Puyjoli bowed gravely.

"The truth of what your wife has told needs no corroboration from me. I had gone to your house, seeking my brother, Gérard de Monpazier,—your friend, was not he?—whom I had seen a few hours before, and who told me he should go to your house that night for shelter. I did not find my brother there, as I expected, and, as your wife was afraid it was not safe

for me to wait in the house to see Gérard, she gave me the key of the pavilion, while she kept watch in the garden for Monpazier. He did not come. Instead came a guard of soldiers, seeking for you, and your wife flew to warn me to leave the pavilion by the secret passage as they would, without doubt, search there for you. The words you heard spoken by her were those of sisterly admonition. She feared I was too foolhardy, too reckless——”

Here, however, André interrupted him. Holding out his arms, he exclaimed brokenly,

“My wife—my noble, outraged wife, can you ever forgive me?”

With a cry of joy, of rapture, Clotilde flung herself on his breast. He held her pressed to his heart in silence for some moments, then, gently releasing her, he stepped up to Gaston, holding out his hand.

“Forgive me. We are both fugitives, both menaced by the same danger. I have neither the power nor the will to injure you. I saw your brother on that night you came to seek him. We supped together, and he is safe, I am sure of it. As you know, I could not offer him the shelter of my roof, but I sent him to a place where I should have gone myself, had not I met Gérard.”

“You sent my brother to the house of one of your friends?”

“I did.”

“Still,” replied Gaston, gloomily, “it was almost certain death for my brother to walk the streets of Paris alone on the thirty-first of May.”

“I have no doubt, however, he reached the house I sent him to in safety.”

“Did this friend of yours know Gérard?”

“No.”

“Puyjoli appeared to meditate deeply over these words of André’s, and his anxiety about his brother was enlivened by a ray of hope. André was safe—why not Gérard?”

“You do not think, then, that Gérard could have been arrested in the streets of Paris on the night of the 31st of May?”

“I hardly think so. He was well disguised.”

Puyjoli marched restlessly up and down the room.

“This man to whom you sent my brother—was he one of your colleagues in the Convention?”

“No, but a man quite devoted to me.”

“I have no right to ask you his name, yet I confess I should like to know into whose hands it was, you confided Gérard’s life.”

“To the hands of a merchant, a draper. After all, why should not I tell you his name? your brother’s secret is your secret. If, by any chance, you should ever meet Citizen Leroux, you may thank him for saving your brother’s life.”

The reader may perhaps remember here, that Germaine had told Clotilde that Monpazier had been to her father’s, but the wife of the Girondin, anxious and alarmed for her husband’s safety, had entirely forgotten the circumstance.

“Vincent Leroux,” returned the other, joyfully; “I know him. The draper in the Rue du Mail. I saved his daughter’s life one day.”

“Oh,” exclaimed Clotilde, laughingly, “there is sure to be a woman in the case if you have anything to do with it.” Then, turning to her husband: “He was called

‘the beautiful Puyjoli’ in his native province, greatly to his disgust too, as it happened.”

Gaston answered, comforted, “So the gruff old draper, Vincent Leroux, who warned me away from his shop and his lovely daughter, it is he, is it, who opened his house to my brother? Well, I thank him with all my soul for it. And, after all, I bore him no ill-will though he did shut his door unceremoniously in my face. His daughter—what a lovely girl she is! and the best, the sweetest creature, present company excepted,” (bowing to Clotilde), “in the world.”

“Your brother certainly found a refuge, a sure and safe one at Leroux’s, I know,” returned Thorel, confidently.

CHAPTER III.

GERMAINE.

BABET, on returning to the dining-room, was not a little surprised and delighted to find her two guests, who, when she had left them, seemed ready to fly at each other's throats, the best friends imaginable. Clotilde, too, was smiling, and seemed quite happy.

"Ah," Babet whispered to her, "they appear to be the best friends in the world."

"As you see."

"And how did this change come about?"

"Through me?"

Babet was only too happy to behold peace and harmony within her walls again. How pleased Nicholas would be, was her first thought. But, alas! this peace—gentle peace—which brooded now over all, was soon to be disturbed and put to flight. Just then some one knocked at the door.

This time it was neither Verdier nor his friend La Bussière. It was a woman—a tall, young woman, dressed in black, with a beautiful, sad face, surmounted by heavy braids of rich, chestnut-coloured hair.

"Whom do you wish to see here, Citizeness?" inquired Babet, nervously, of the new-comer. She was quite a stranger to her, and Babet, poor woman, had had enough of strangers."

“The girl—she was only a girl—answered promptly, “The Viscount Puyjoli.”

“What,” stammered Babet; “I—I——”

“Monsieur de Puyjoli—he is here, I know.”

Again terror—wild, unreasoning, blind terror—filled the worthy housewife’s breast. Monsieur de Puyjoli! And she knew he was here! Then probably all the street knew it!

“Citizeness, I tell you——”

“Please let Monsieur de Puyjoli know that I wish to speak to him,” returned the stranger coldly; “and at once. Tell him I have brought him a message from the daughter of the ci-devant Marquis de Louverchal.”

“Louverchal—Puyjoli! What names are these?” repeated Babet, affecting surprise. But, alas! she was a bad actress. Nicholas would have felt ashamed of her, had he heard her. “We have, it is true, two strangers from the Provinces visiting us—Citizen Plantade (here she raised her voice so as to be heard in the adjoining room), and Citizen Larcenac. Citizeness Barbier, a neighbour, has also been in to have a few words with me, but Viscount so-and-so, and Marquis this-and-that, merciful Heaven! for what do you take us, Citizeness?”

“My name is Germaine Leroux,” returned the other quietly; “you or your friends have nothing to fear from me, I assure you.”

She had raised her voice unconsciously in the ardour of her entreaty. A door behind Babet was now opened suddenly, and Puyjoli appeared at it.

“Ah, Citizeness Germaine,” he exclaimed, greeting her cordially; then, turning to Babet, he said: “It is a friend, have no fear.”

Greatly to his surprise, the girl recoiled from his outstretched hand, and her pale face turned ghastly white at sight of him.

"You do not fear me, Germaine?" he asked gently.

"No, it was to see you that I came."

Babet, comprehending that she had come on an errand of some importance to Puyjoli, now invited her to enter the dining-room, where Clotilde and her husband were. Germaine, however, refused.

"I have come," she said, speaking in low, trembling tones, "to bring M. de Puyjoli news of a friend of his."

Puyjoli's face brightened. She had come to bring him tidings of his brother. Babet, divining that the girl wished to speak alone with Puyjoli, ushered the two into the little room which served Pluche as a library. When they were alone together, Puyjoli, bending over the chair into which Germaine had dropped, her weak, trembling limbs refusing to support her longer, took both her hands in his.

"I have come," she began eagerly, as though dreading his first addressing her—"I have come from Mademoiselle de Louverchal."

"From Bertha?" he returned, very much astonished. "What has happened? Is she in danger?"

"She? No, not at this moment, certainly, but her father——"

"The Marquis——"

"Has been arrested and thrown into prison."

"He arrested? The most inoffensive and harmless of mortals!"

"He was denounced to the Committee of Public Safety yesterday, arrested this morning, and carried off to the prison of Saint Lazare."

“Good Heavens!”

“Monsieur de Louverchal was making preparations to flee from Paris with his daughter. His purpose was suspected. His porter, when questioned, gave confused and unsatisfactory answers——”

“That drivelling idiot, Bonnemain——”

“Mademoiselle was not, strange to say, arrested at the same time with her father. She is still at the hôtel in the Rue Mirabeau, but in a state of terror and despair at the fate probably awaiting her father, alone and friendless. She thought of me, and came to me to help her——”

“And you have come to me. Thanks, a thousand thanks to you for doing so. She desired you to summon me to her?”

“No, she asked me only to let you know that she was alone and in danger.”

“Well, in an hour I shall be with her. It is hardly necessary for me, however, to present myself in this costume at the Hôtel Louverchal. Allow me to absent myself for a few minutes to change this ridiculous garb for that of an ordinary citizen, and I will be at your—at her service.” He added smilingly, “I will only keep you waiting five minutes, and in the mean time, the Thorels will bear you company.

“Oh,” returned Germaine, eagerly, “now that my errand is done, I need not wait. I do not care about meeting the Thorels.”

“Go away? Oh, you must not think of doing that. I want to speak to you of my brother, you know. Is he well? Is he still at your house?”

“Your brother!”—her ashy-white lips trembled so they could hardly form the words.

“Yes, yes, my brother—or did not he tell you he was my brother?”

“You have a brother——”

“Of course, Gérard de Monpazier, who came to your house on the night of the 2d of June, is my brother.”

She looked ready to faint, and Puyjoli, out of compassion for her, made an effort to subdue his eagerness.

“On the night of the 2d of June a man came to your house seeking shelter,” he forced himself to speak very slowly and calmly. Her blue lips formed with difficulty the one word:

“Shelter.”

“Sent to your house by André Thorel.”

Raising her great, sad eyes with a supreme effort to Puyjoli’s face, she said slowly:

“No man—came—to our house——”

“He did not come to your house? Oh, but he must have come. Perhaps, though, you did not see him. It was your father——”

“My father,” she panted, “saw nobody!”

Puyjoli’s handsome face had grown white and drawn with anxiety. “But Thorel assured me he sent my brother to your father’s house. I must go and tell Thorel what you have just told me, that no one came to your house on the night of the 2d of June. Come—let us go together into the next room. I want him to hear from your own lips that my brother never reached your house.

Germaine hesitated. She felt unequal to the ordeal of facing Thorel and answering his interrogations. She was fearful she might betray her father were she forced to answer Thorel’s clear and searching cross-examination. She rose hastily, her slight figure swaying

unsteadily, her great dark eyes glowing in a face white and cold as marble.

“I cannot stop,” she gasped. “I will come again. Tell M. Thorel what I have told you, of course, but do not forget, meanwhile, that Mademoiselle de Louverchal is expecting you.”

“I will be off directly,” returned Puyjoli, feverishly, a prey to conflicting emotions. Anxiety about his missing brother, and the desire to fly to Mademoiselle de Louverchal’s assistance. “But I must first have a word with Thorel.”

Germaine, deaf to his entreaties to remain, left the house quickly. She walked forward like an automaton, seeing nothing, hearing nothing of what was going on around her. One thought filled her soul to the extinction of all others. She had lied, lied cruelly to the man she loved, to shield her father. Never, she told herself, had a lie so black, so cruel, been spoken before, since the beginning of the world. Never would another so base be uttered until the end of it. But if she had confessed to Gérard’s presence in the house, how could she keep from confessing her knowledge of the cruel scene which she had, though only dimly, witnessed on that dreadful night? Her blood froze now at the thought of it. The knowledge of her father’s crime had blighted her youth, broken her heart. “If I could die,” she moaned, “die and be rid of it all.”

Walking as a somnambulist might, the unhappy girl reached the door of the shop in the Rue du Mail. When she entered she became aware that her father had a visitor—an old man, with whom he seemed in earnest conversation. As she came in, both turned toward her, and her father exclaimed, with evident pride:

"There she is herself—my daughter, of whom we have been speaking."

He started, however, at the sight of her pale face and feeble, tottering gait.

"Are you sick, Germaine?" he inquired, anxiously. Answering in the affirmative, she passed them quickly, ascended the stairs and hurried to her own chamber.

She had been there but a few moments when a knock came at the door and her father entered. He seemed very much annoyed. He inquired sternly:

"Why did you run away just now? You are not sick?"

"No," she murmured.

"You do not know," he continued in a milder tone, "what was the object of Citizen Bernard's visit to me just now. You have no idea?" he questioned eagerly.

"Why did he come?" she returned indifferently.

"We were talking, it was odd, was not it, of you, just as you came in."

"Of me?"

"After all, there is nothing very astonishing about that. Your name is always on my lips, my dear Germaine, my happiness, my joy, my daughter. But this time it was not I who was speaking of you. It was he. You have no idea what he came for? Do not you want to know?" he persisted, as she made no answer.

"What was it?" she inquired, listlessly.

"Well, he has a son, Citizen Bernard, a fine, handsome fellow, rich too, and he has seen you."

"And who desires to marry me, perhaps," she inquired brusquely, looking with her great sad eyes full in her father's face.

"Oh," he stammered, frightened, he hardly knew why, at her look. "Citizen Bernard came to inquire if

I would consent to your marriage—if you—in short, if after seeing his son, you should like him, and he were to ask for your hand——”

“My hand,” she wailed. “I marry! You know very well that I can never marry.”

“Why not?” replied Leroux, affecting to misunderstand.

“Father, do not you know why? Do not you know the secret which will keep me from marrying?”

Vincent Leroux had grown pale as death. He muttered the word “secret” under his breath, then, laughing hoarsely, he exclaimed:

“You are in love with somebody else—secretly in love.” All the latent violence of his nature awoke in him at the thought. He glared ferociously at the girl before him, and continued:

“*Mille tonnerres*—idiot that I was! I had forgotten; but I know——”

“What do you know?” asked his daughter. He laughed angrily.

“It is the *ci-devant* you are in love with. *Parbleau!* The *ci-devant*. The popinjay Viscount, who used to come dangling about you. The dandy with the pink-and-white complexion and yellow curls, like a girl’s.”

“M. de Puyjoli.”

“Ah, see then, how quickly his name comes to your lips. And it is he, the fop, the aristocrat, who has stolen the love of my child.”

“If I loved him, it was without his knowledge and from no fault of his. But I do not love him. I have no right to love him or any one, but him least of all,” she replied, a sudden expression of horror distorting her features.

The draper repeated blankly, "Him less than any one else—why?"

"Why!" she exclaimed, with a piercing cry, "You ask me why! You wish to know why!"

"Yes, I wish it."

"Well, I will tell you. I have no right to love him, because the Viscount Puyjoli is the brother of Gérard de Monpazier,"

"Monpazier," whispered her father, with lips white and trembling. He recoiled as though the floor before his feet had suddenly opened. He gazed anxiously at his daughter. Why had she spoken of Gérard de Monpazier. Could it be that she divined,—he continued almost involuntarily his questioning:

"Ah," with a supreme effort at self-control, "so Puyjoli is the brother of that man."

"Yes, his brother, his brother——"

"Well," he continued hardly, still gazing at her.

A strange metamorphosis had come over her. This girl, usually so gentle, calm, languid even, stood facing him, stern, resolute as an avenging angel. Her hair had come undone, and hung in thick dark masses on each side of her set, rigid countenance, out of which her eyes stared stonily past him, as though looking at some vision of horror.

"Do you know whom I have just seen?" she inquired, in a voice so cold and monotonous that he shivered as it fell on his ears.

"Whom?"

"M. de Puyjoli. And do you know what were the first words he spoke to me? an inquiry for his brother. He knew that he had been here, sent here by André Thorel."

Leroux leaned heavily against the chimney-piece. For a moment it seemed to him as if he must fall, but he rallied immediately. Now he understood that Germaine knew, and had perhaps witnessed, his murder of Monpazier. He stood there, stiff, erect, as if turned to stone. He essayed to speak, but his lips were incapable of forming an intelligible word.

“But you cannot guess what I said,” continued the unhappy girl, wringing her hands as she spoke: “When M. de Puyjoli asked for his brother, I said we knew nothing of him, that he had never been to our house at all.”

“Germaine! Germaine!” exclaimed her father, falling at her feet and grovelling before her.

She made no effort to raise him, only went on in her low, even, monotonous tones: “I did my duty as a daughter, did not I? If anything had happened to M. de Monpazier that night—as perhaps there did—and I should have acknowledged that he had been here, M. de Puyjoli might have come here to cross-examine, to question you.” She burst out laughing—a laugh more dreadful to listen to than a scream of agony.

Lifting his hands in supplication, her father, still kneeling there before her, cried hoarsely:

“Germaine, forgive me—pity me. If you did but know how it happened. I never meant to kill him. Upon my soul I did not. I went to ask him to help me. He drew a pistol on me, and he was dead before I knew it. I swear it! I was mad—mad! I did not know what I was doing. Ah, wretch though I am, will not you pity—forgive me? His money—I would have paid for it with every drop of blood in my veins, that you might have it—I did not want it for myself, but that you, my child, should not suffer want.”

She shuddered back from him, veiling her face ;
“How can you say it was for me—for me you——”

“Germaine, Germaine, listen ! He was an aristocrat, a traitor ; he was going to fight against France, the Republic. He deserved his fate.”

“Did he ?” she answered coldly. “Perhaps, but he was your guest,” here she stopped suddenly, and looked round her fearfully. A pause ensued. Slowly the man kneeling at her feet raised his bent head, and with despairing eyes, looked up at her. Again he murmured with livid lips a prayer for mercy, for forgiveness.

“Rise,” she said, “I will not betray you. Did not I keep your secret for you just now ? Your secret ! it is mine and I will guard it. It is,” she added with her dreadful laugh, “a family secret.”

Leroux sprang quickly to his feet again. “What is it that you wish me to do ?” he asked roughly, “I tell you I did not know what I was doing. I was mad—drunk, and the handle of that man’s pistol, the pistol with which he would have killed me, contained papers from Pitt and Coburg, to the rebels in La Vendée. You must understand now, Germaine, that this man was a traitor—a spy of the English—an aristocrat—one of the brood which has plunged all France in misery.

“He was your guest,” she answered, shuddering.

“My guest ! Is my house to be made a den for traitors ?”

“But you kept his gold,” she retorted coldly, and Leroux fell back as though he had been struck in the face.

The gold. Yes, he had kept his gold. It was this gold with which he had paid off his creditors—this gold which had saved him from bankruptcy.

Germaine could endure the scene no longer. Falling on her knees by the side of the bed, she buried her face in the bedclothes, murmuring:

“I can bear no more. For pity’s sake leave me—leave me alone for a while.”

“Yes, yes, I will go,” he answered hastily; and with slow and heavy footsteps he turned and left the room.

CHAPTER IV.

MADEMOISELLE DE LOUVERCHAL.

BEFORE setting out for the Rue de Mirabeau, Puyjoli determined to let André know that Monpazier had not been at the Leroux's.

Leroux, his daughter positively asserted, had had no visitor on the night of the 2d of June.

André, who was alone in the room, Clotilde having gone into the kitchen to help Babet, on hearing it, seemed very much concerned. It seemed only too probable that some terrible fate had overtaken his friend.

Puyjoli, young, courageous, light-hearted, could not himself realise all the dangers which environed a fugitive in Paris. Was not he himself a fugitive and in hiding, and as yet in no danger at all?

But Thorel, graver, older, more experienced, divined that some terrible misfortune must have overtaken his unhappy friend. He was aware, too, that Monpazier knew of no other place of refuge than the draper's shop. What could have prevented his going there? He had without doubt been arrested and carried off to prison as an émigré, or attacked and murdered in some lonely street or alley by a midnight assassin.

Thorel was quite convinced that Monpazier was either in prison or dead.

"It is strange," he repeated again and again, "but

what could have prevented Monpazier's going to Leroux?"

Puyjoli, on his part, regarded this anxiety of Thorel as odd and exaggerated.

"I shall never forgive myself," André exclaimed, "if, through my desertion of him, an untoward accident has befallen Gérard."

"By his desertion of Monpazier," Puyjoli thought, looking suspiciously at the other's pale and anxious countenance.

"Alas, my poor Gérard!—my poor, unhappy Gérard," again exclaimed the Girondin.

"Certainly he gives up hope very quickly," mused the other; "he has already, it seems, begun to chant Gérard's funeral psalm."

"If Gérard is no longer living, I shall be the prey of never-ending remorse."

"Truly," interrupted Puyjoli, impatiently, "you seem in a great hurry to chant the *Dies iræ* over Gérard. Why should not he be as much alive as we are?"

"But you say he never reached Leroux's."

"Well, there are other houses in Paris besides the draper's, and Gérard was well disguised." It was now Puyjoli's part to reassure Thorel, but a few moments before so cheerful concerning Monpazier.

Just here, however, their conference was broken off by a great noise of voices and the sound of muskets rattling in the garden outside the door.

"What can that be?" exclaimed Thorel.

Clotilde came running in from the kitchen and flung her arms round her husband, wondering piteously if she had but just got him back, only to have him torn from her arms immediately.

"Well, they have run us down, it seems," cried Puyjoli.

Babet now burst into the room, white as a sheet.

"Citizens, Citizeness,—Ah, merciful Heaven, we are lost! I have just seen from the window that the house is surrounded by soldiers."

"Surrounded?" exclaimed Puyjoli.

"I hear the rattling of muskets," added Thorel.

"Ah," exclaimed Clotilde, "at least we can die together, André."

The door was now thrown wide open, and Publicola Verdier's tall, gaunt form appeared within it.

"In the name of the Law," he said sternly, "let no one quit the apartment."

André and the Viscount threw at the same moment a glance at the swords and theatrical weapons ranged against the wall opposite.

"Shall we," inquired Puyjoli, "not endeavour to defend ourselves with these tin swords and spears?"

"We can try it," returned the other, grasping the nearest weapon.

"Useless," returned Verdier, coldly, "my people are outside. I have only to raise my voice and you will be shot down in a moment. We are ten to one."

He crossed over to where Clotilde leaned against a table, pale and trembling.

"You are Citizeness Thorel, the wife of the Girondin. I arrest you."

"From whom have you received this information?" demanded André.

"From whom? The Citizeness Thorel has been denounced by the porter of the house in which she lodges."

"The scoundrel!" exclaimed Thorel.

"How he discovered it is of no consequence. La Bussière informed me of the denunciation at the Section. Men will be sent here presently from the Section to search for you, and also in the house opposite. I, with my friends, have got ahead of them. I have come here to arrest you, Citizeness, and take you away with me."

"Arrest her! Take her away? What is the offence?"

Verdier replied dryly, "I am not here to discuss that; I am here to arrest her." Then, tossing back his head, he continued, "She has drawn down too much attention upon herself. She has been met with too often in the ante-chambers of patriots. She has wearied the deputies by her intercessions for her husband, a fugitive and contumacious——"

"Dear Clotilde," whispered André looking at her remorsefully.

"And as we have no traces of her husband, we have determined to arrest the wife, who will, perhaps, be able to give us some tidings of his whereabouts."

"Never!" exclaimed Clotilde, with a smile, "Never, never!"

"And you have come to carry her off to prison?"

"It is the order."

"It is death," exclaimed Puyjoli.

"Hasten, hasten," warned Verdier.

André, disregarding his wife's beseeching looks and gestures, advanced toward the Jacobin.

"One moment, citizen. If you arrest the Citizeness, you must arrest me with her. I am her husband, the contumacious deputy of whom you just now spoke. I am he, I, André Thorel, the Girondin." The Jacobin's hard face grew harder. He measured his opponent with scornful, unfriendly glances.

Puyjoli, on his part, had hard work to keep from following Thorel's example. It was only by a supreme effort that he refrained from saying:

"And *vive Dieu*, but you can arrest me with Citizen Thorel. I am the Viscount de Puyjoli."

The thought of the duty he owed towards Mademoiselle de Louverchal restrained him, however. He must sustain her, protect her. As long as he lived he must do so."

Poor Babet stood there, the picture of despair. With clasped hands, she ejaculated the word "mercy, mercy," continually. Whether to soften Publicola's heart or soften an unpropitious Fate, is uncertain.

Verdier remained standing immovable on the threshold of the door, his grizzled head touching the lintel. He muttered between his clenched teeth again and again,

"A Girondin—you—and the other——"

"Citizen Martial Plantade," returned André eagerly, seeing that Puyjoli was weary of masquerading.

"Possibly," returned the Jacobin, "but I doubt it. Suspected persons—all of you. And you too, Citizeness Babet, the Republic has good reasons to doubt your loyalty, yours and your husband's. Where is your husband?"

"My poor Nicholas," sighed Babet.

"Where is he?"

"At the theatre, at his post."

Verdier still continued to gaze menacingly and fixedly at the other occupants of the room. In his eyes, so dull usually, a strange, sullen fire burned. He seemed to want to speak, but the words died away stammeringly on his rigid lips.

An icy silence reigned. A silence as in the presence

of death. It was broken suddenly by Verdier clenching his bony fists; and as though struggling with himself, he exclaimed,

"I have an idea—but there are too many of you—and you are not to be trusted, probably—" He stopped abruptly, as though fearing to have said too much.

"You may trust us," André answered quickly, a slight feeling of hope awaking in his heart at the evident hesitation of the leader of the Section.

"I love my child," he continued, speaking in low, hoarse tones, "he is all I have left to love, and she," he pointed towards Clotilde with a long, bony finger as he spoke, "nursed him, saved his life perhaps. His mother had deserted him—the wretch. My child—when one touches me on that point, one touches a tender point. Look here." He took a paper out of the pocket of his blouse, and began reading it aloud slowly:

"Allow Citizen Publicola Verdier to pass out of Paris, with his wife and child."

André felt his heart leap for joy. It seemed to him as though a door of safety had been opened for him and his wife suddenly.

"That is a passport," he exclaimed.

"From the Commune, yes."

"A passport—well?" inquired Thorel, wonderingly.

"Well," returned Verdier, frowning, "I am not ungrateful, I hope, though hard, hard as iron. Service for service. There are some services one can never repay, still, the life of my little one is worth that slip of paper, is not it?" And now," he continued roughly, "if the citizeness will consent to play the rôle—a villainous one,—of my wife, we could leave Paris together with the little one, and I could find refuge for her in

some hut or cabin and then return to my lodgings again.

"You would do that?" exclaimed André, seizing the unwilling hand of the Jacobin.

"He is a good fellow after all, Publicola," murmured Puyjoli to Babet, who was still too frightened to comprehend what was going on about her.

"But yet," exclaimed Verdier, "how to manage it? the passport is for Cornelia and me."

"Well, well, take her as your wife, away with you, and place her in safety," said Thorel impatiently.

"And you?" asked Clotilde.

"Oh, I shall live, I swear it, live to be with you again."

"Live, live," muttered Verdier between his teeth, "'tis easily said, but how?" And the Jacobin gazed coldly and searchingly into the brilliant dark eyes of the Girondin. He held the life of this young, handsome, courageous man in his great, bony hands.

"Listen," he went on deliberately, "I know you by your votes in the Convention. You have always voted as a patriot and a good citizen. You threw yourself, unfortunately, into the Brissot faction, a faction which would have ruined the Republic if there had not been another party there strong enough and bold enough to save it. But, on the whole, you have shown yourself faithful to the Republic of which we are both citizens."

"I was one of the first to proclaim it; I hoped to have been one of its founders."

"She bears your name," returned Verdier with a glance in Clotilde's direction, "take this safe-conduct, and leave Paris with her. I do not desire to know whither you go. From this day I shall forget that you

ever existed, and, I desire you also not to remember me. While you, under my name, flee from Paris, I shall remain here to defend my country and fight for her."

Thorel gazed wonderingly at this man in silence. He could hardly realise what had happened. Tears filled Clotilde's eyes, while Babet clasped her hand and gazed devoutly upward. Puyjoli, in his turn, quite forgetting Mademoiselle de Louverchal for the moment, gazed reverentially at the stern features of the Jacobin.

"Here," exclaimed Verdier again, impatiently holding out the passport towards André; here, take it."

André took it hesitatingly, adding, "But if at any time you should have need of it."

"For whom?" asked Verdier, in cold bitter tones, "for the wife who has deserted her child and me? As for me—I desire nothing better than to die for the Republic, and if my head should one day be demanded by my country, I shall not falter or stumble as I mount the scaffold. My blood, it is probable, will be poured out at the Sacrifice of the Red Mass, as that of so many others has already been."

"The Red Mass?" returned Puyjoli, curiously.

"The Red Mass—you have never heard the expression before, then?"

"I am from Peri—Pompadour," replied Puyjoli.

"The Red Mass—it is the Mass where Sanson figures as the celebrant," returned the other.

"And on the altar of which many an innocent victim is sacrificed," André said gloomily.

"There were many innocent peasants oppressed, starved, hanged upon the roadside by our noble masters of not very long ago." Then, turning to André, he added brutally:

“Take my advice, and leave Paris as soon as possible. Join Wimpfen at Caen, if you choose, but if it be my fate to meet you in arms against the Republic, I shall have forgotten by that time the service your wife once did me.”

“My place of combat is the tribune, the council-hall of the Nation,” returned André. “When France is free again, I shall take my place again.”

“She will be free when her foes and traitors are no more.” Then, turning to Clotilde, he added, “Citizeness Thorel, you watched once at the bedside of my son; promise me, if anything should happen to me, if it is in your power, to succour him.”

“With all my heart,” she returned fervently. “He shall be to me as my own.” She was about to take his hand, but he drew it back roughly.

“It is well. There is nothing more to be said. I shall now rejoin my men outside, with the news that Citizeness Thorel had already quitted this house some time before I entered it.”

“But if they should not believe you?” inquired Puyjoli.

Verdier stared coldly at him.

“He is always believed who is known to have no fear of death.”

“And who risks his life to save that of others,” added Thorel, deeply moved.

“Speak no more of that, but set out at once on your journey.” Then, turning to Puyjoli, who was standing near him, both hands thrust deep down into the pockets of his shabby riding-coat, he continued, “and you, too, Citizen Martial. It is time, too, for you to quit this house. Citizen Pluche’s house has attracted the atten-

tion of too many prying eyes lately, to be a safe place of refuge."

Clotilde, who in the meanwhile had been examining the safe-conduct, now approached Verdier, saying,

"Citizen, I do not think you have looked at this passport."

"Why?"

"Look here, you see it says, 'Pass Citizen Publicola Verdier, travelling with wife and child.' We have no child. Would it not be better for the little one if you were to confide him to our care *now*, instead of waiting until it may be too late? You are obliged to be absent a great deal from him. He may be sick again. Let me take him. When peace is again restored to France, to Paris, you can reclaim your little one."

"Ah, you do not know what you are doing, when you ask me to part from my child. But you are right Paris, in these days, is no place for a motherless child. The fresh air, the freedom of a country life, will perhaps bring back some colour to his pale cheeks. You are right, a man does not understand how to take care of a child. In an hour I will return here with him. The poor little fellow has no mother. Be a mother to him."

There was a rattling of the muskets on the ground outside, as though the men were growing impatient at being kept waiting so long. Becoming aware of this, Verdier, resuming his cold, stern aspect, which had been strangely softened while speaking to Clotilde, and nodding slightly to the company, strode toward the door. A moment later the squad of men, with Verdier at their head, had marched out of the garden and down the street.

Now Puyjoli could change his dress and set out for

the hôtel in the Rue Mirabeau. Just then the prompter entered the house, humming an air he had picked up in the coulisses.

“Why, how strange you all look!”

“And no wonder,” returned his wife, “we are under the surveillance of the Sections.”

“Well,” returned the heroic little man, “no one can escape his fate.” Then, turning to Puyjoli, he added, “Citizen François de Neufchâteau has written a play for us, which has every prospect of being a great success.”

“Indeed!”

“Pamela.”

“I will go and see it, if I am not dead before it appears. Is Sophie to play in it?”

“I do not think so. Though the parts have not yet been distributed.”

“Pamela?” returned the viscount, thoughtfully, “the title is a pretty one, though, after all, pretty names are often as deceitful as pretty faces.”

This reflection reminding him suddenly of his visit to Mademoiselle Bertha, he took his leave precipitately, after embracing Pluche, and imprinting more than one kiss of gratitude on Babet’s still fresh, smooth cheeks.

On the threshold of the door he turned and looked back, exclaiming gaily ;

“Ah, I had almost forgotten to leave my regards for Citizen Médard. A capital fellow Citizen Médard, the only fault he has is that his Christian name is Maximilian. The kindest regards of the late Citizen Martial Plantade to him, if you please.”

It was a beautiful day. Puyjoli drank in with

eagerness and delight the balmy air of July. Compelled for so long to confinement in the house, he fairly revelled in the gay aspect of all around him,—the women in their light summer gowns and fluttering tri-coloured ribbons, the children who looked up into his handsome face with smiling, innocent glances. He hurried on, however; he was anxious to reach the hôtel in the Rue Mirabeau.

When he did arrive there, he found it to all appearances quite deserted.

He hesitated. Would not his coming there place Bertha in still greater peril? He decided, after a moment's hesitation, that he must see her. Lifting the ponderous knocker, he knocked loud and long. After a delay of some moments the door was opened slightly and a female head appeared in the aperture. It was the femme de chambre, who uttered an exclamation of joy at seeing him.

Mademoiselle de Louverchal, the maid said, was alone with her in the hôtel. The house was quiet and damp as a tomb, even on this bright day in July. Since her father's arrest Bertha had left the house only twice, once to go to Germaine's, and once to the prison in the vain attempt to see her father. A letter from the Marquis had begged her not to make a second attempt, and cautioned her to remain concealed for the present. One person alone had called several times at the hôtel for news of M. de Puyjoli. It was Migrayon, the former valet of the Viscount.

Mademoiselle de Louverchal was quite overcome with joy at the sight of Puyjoli. It seemed to her as though an angel of salvation had entered the house in the person of this handsome young man. Did not he

face all and any danger with a smile? She, in his eyes, was always charming, adorable, but more adorable than ever with her fair hair in disorder, innocent of powder, and her pretty eyes red with weeping. Her voice, formerly so gay, murmured gently, sadly:

“Ah, how I have longed to see you.”

Puyjoli made an effort to keep his light, rallying tone in replying to her. It would not do for her to see how perilous he really thought her situation.

Bertha, however, seemed to have no thoughts for herself, they were all for her father. How could they manage to set him at liberty, she inquired of Puyjoli, anxiously.

It would be easier to join him in prison than to set him at liberty. For the present that was impossible. He could, if she desired, share her father's prison with him; he could not free him from that prison. Now he must contrive to get Bertha away. The hôtel was no longer a safe dwelling-place for her. But where could he take her? He could think of but one place, and the idea of such a refuge for this young and innocent girl was in the highest degree distasteful to him. Still, in the face of such supreme danger all scruples of delicacy, he told himself, must give way. It was to Sophie Clerval's apartment that he decided to take Bertha. Yet would she consent to go there? She would, she must. Still, he hesitated. It was cruel, it was ungrateful toward Sophie. Poor Sophie, ready to fling herself into the flames for him. How could he ask her to take Mademoiselle de Louverchal under her protection? He knew, too, that though the actress would willingly run any risks for him, she might refuse to imperil her own safety, her life even, for Bertha. Cer-

tainly she would do so if she suspected a possible rival in Bertha. He made up his mind, however, that she must not be allowed to suspect this. He would ask Sophie to shelter Bertha as a near and dear relative of his. This was not a time to be scrupulous when the life of the woman he adored hung in the balance.

He bade Mademoiselle wrap herself in a dark mantle, and advised her, instead of putting on her hat, to cover her head with one of her maid's caps. They must be careful not to draw attention to themselves on the street.

"Where are you going to take me, Viscount?" she inquired.

"To the house of one of my friends. To Sophie Clerval's, the actress."

Bertha started and shook her head.

"Oh, no—not there."

"Mademoiselle," he inquired sternly, "do you wish to save your father from the scaffold?"

"What a question!"

"Sophie Clerval is a good Republican. She is well acquainted with and well liked by citizen Fabré d'Eglantine and Romsin, the rulers of France to-day. I know of no other place of refuge for you. It is not necessary, I should think, to push aside a helping hand because the hand itself happens to be a beautiful one."

"But she is—in—in—love, I have heard——"

"She may be good enough to have some esteem for me. All the more reason for her helping one so dear to me. Besides, there is no question of me at all here. It concerns only you and your father."

"Let us go to Citizeness Clerval," answered Bertha resolutely.

They set out at once. On their way thither Puyjoli wondered anxiously what sort of a reception he and his charge would receive from the actress.

“Ugh!” he thought, with a great feeling of self-disgust. “Poor Sophie, how I shall have to lie to her.” If any other hole or corner had presented itself to his recollection he would most certainly have bent his steps thither in preference to proceeding to Sophie’s elegant apartment.

When they arrived there, the actress, they were told, had just that moment returned from the theatre. Fortunately, however, for Puyjoli’s peace of mind, he was ignorant of the fact that she was in a furious temper, having been left out altogether in the distribution of the parts for ‘Pamela.’

Leaving Bertha in the drawing-room, Puyjoli knocked at the door of Sophie’s boudoir. At sight of him Sophie burst into tears—tears of joy. A moment later, she began to dance round and round him, laughing and clasping her little white hands. At this, Gaston laid his finger on his lips, as a sign for her to be cautious, whispering, “Hush, hush.”

“Why?”

“I did not come by myself.”

“With whom, then? The *gens d’armes*?”

“Nonsense, I have a lady with me—my cousin.”

“A cousin! I did not know you had any cousins.”

“My dear child, I have a hundred at least.”

“But why did you bring her here?”

“Because I wish to put her in your care—under your protection.”

“My care—my protection—for your cousin—ha, ha, ha!”

“She could, moreover, have the benefit of your instruction in——”

“Ta-ta-ta, what on earth do you mean? But after all, what do I care? Do you know you have not embraced me yet?”

She threw herself into his arms at these words and kissed him passionately. Puyjoli did not repulse, but just as little did he respond to her caresses.

“What is the matter with you?” she inquired suddenly, struck by his agitated demeanour.

“Nothing—only I am anxious about my cousin.”

“Oh, your cousin. But I do not care anything at all about your cousin. I care only for you. Where have you hidden yourself all these long, dreary weeks? Ah, Gaston, if you only knew how many tears I have shed on your account.”

“Then you have not quite forgotten me?”

“Idiot!” she answered scornfully.

“So much the worse,” thought Puyjoli. “My cousin’s life is in danger here in Paris,” he continued eagerly.

“So is yours.”

“Ah, but she is a woman. Sophie, I want to leave her here in your care. May I? She can remain here as your relation, your companion, your pupil.”

The actress burst into loud, shrill laughter.

“Are you out of your senses, Gaston? Your cousin—a lady—a good girl, remain here—with me—as my pupil? Ah, pardon, you mean she is supposed to be studying for the stage, under my instruction.”

“Just so; and,” continued Puyjoli, hardily, trying to smile, but changing colour visibly, “and while she is here, my dear Sophie, I am afraid we must treat each

other more formally than we have been in the habit of doing."

"I understand," she returned fiercely. "I understand you only too well."

"Listen to me, dear, kind, good girl that you are, I must ask one more proof of your devotion to me. Forgive me, forget me, I am not worthy of your love, Sophie, but protect and cherish this girl, and I shall never cease to love and thank you for your kindness to her."

"For I shall have saved for you the life of the woman you love," returned Sophie, whose eyes had grown haggard, and whose white bosom heaved stormily as she concluded. "Ah, do not lie to me. I understand very well what the service is you have come here to-day to ask of me. Parbleu! You ask me to save the life of your cousin, a cousin you will marry later (if you both manage to escape the guillotine) when you shall have forgotten Sophie Clerval. What am I saying? you have forgotten her now—forgotten at least that you ever loved her, though you remember well enough the poor fool loved—loves you—well enough to die for *you*. Ah, I know you, you aristocrats. We should be grateful, you think, to have served you as toys of an hour. But, though I may be ready to give my life for *you*, why should I risk it for her, that you two may marry and laugh afterward at the poor fool of an actress, who died for you? But *you*, do not you know that women like us suffer when the man we love is taken from us? and by whom, pray? By a woman who rewards your devotion by a smile or a word, and thinks she has well paid you." She walked rapidly up and down the room, tearing a lace handkerchief she held in her hands to shreds as she spoke.

Suddenly she stopped with a wild peal of scornful, bitter laughter. "Why, what a fool I am. I—a sou-brette, to try to play tragedy. It is not my forte at all. I did it execrably, did not I, Gaston? There, take me to your cousin. And now—am not I a good girl, and are you pleased with me?"

"Dear, dear Sophie," he murmured, very much moved, and raising her white hand reverently to his lips.

"Ah, dear to you no longer, I fear, Gaston. But I—you see, you do what you like with me. You are so beautiful, your beauty has bewitched me, you—too beautiful Puyjoli. And now we will go to—*your cousin*."

When they entered the drawing-room together it was plain to be seen in Bertha's glowing eyes and crimson cheeks that Puyjoli's protracted interview with the actress had annoyed her. The welcome given her by Sophie, however, soon disarmed her jealousy.

It was settled that Bertha should have an apartment formerly occupied by the actress's sister, who had died a few months previously of consumption.

"No one has occupied her rooms. They can be put in order for you at once, Mademoiselle. My sister was a good girl, and only sixteen when she died. And now," she continued, turning toward Puyjoli, who had listened to her not a little affected by the kindness of heart of this woman he had formerly held in such slight esteem, "where do you intend to go while Mademoiselle——"

"De Saint Alvère," interrupted Puyjoli, giving, in fact, one of the titles belonging to the de Louverchal family.

"I—now that my cousin is under your kind protection, Mademoiselle—I shall have no difficulty in hiding my fugitive head in some hole or corner."

“Why not seek out your former valet, Migrayon? He came here to inquire for you.”

“Migrayon? He came to us also, but, though he said he was your servant, we were afraid to let him in, fearing he might be a spy.”

“Migrayon a spy! Why, he is as true as steel.”

“Migrayon,” Sophie continued, “left his address with me. He has a lodging with one of his old friends from Perigord. He wished me to say to you that he very much desired to see you, as he had news for you of your brother.”

“My brother,” returned Gaston quickly, “then I will take my leave. I am tormented with anxiety about my poor Gérard.”

Migrayon’s address, which Sophie gave him, was that of a wine-shop outside the barriers. Puyjoli walked rapidly in the direction of the *Prés-Saint-Germaine*, where the cabaret was. It was a long walk there.

The screeching of fiddles announced the vicinity of the Truelle’s wine-shop. A sign with the legend, “The French Guard” printed on it, creaked dismally above the door.

Under the arbours a merry, motley crowd was drinking. On the green a country-dance was being danced.

Puyjoli, as he came nearer, could hear one of the fiddlers calling out the figures of the dance as he played: “Forward two—Ladies’ chain—Balance, ladies turn—Cross—Right and left—Hands all round—”

“Well, in spite of the Revolution and the daily victims of the guillotine, there are still people left in Paris who dance, sing, and otherwise amuse themselves,” thought Puyjoli. “Ah, Paris would feast and dance were the heavens to rain brimstone down upon her.”

In an arbour near by now struck up the Marseillaise, and above the singing, the sound of the fiddles and the fiddler crying the figures of the dance, could yet be heard.

He entered the wine-shop, at this hour almost deserted, and inquired for Citizen Truelle.

"That is my name," replied a thin, elderly man, who was sitting at one of the wooden tables in his shirt-sleeves.

"I wish to see Citizen Migrayon."

Truelle called his wife to conduct the stranger to Citizen Migrayon's chamber. Poor Migrayon was as much moved as Sophie had been at the sight of his former master. He had mourned for him as dead.

Puyjoli, however, soon put an end to these expressions of joy by inquiring for his brother. At that, Migrayon's face changed visibly.

"How can I tell you what has happened, Monsieur le Vicomte," he whispered hoarsely.

"My brother is in prison, perhaps?"

Migrayon remained silent.

"Wounded—in La Vendée?"

"No," returned the valet, "Monsieur le Comte never reached La Vendée."

For pity's sake, tell me. I can bear anything better than this dreadful suspense."

"He died—here—in Paris."

"He is dead?"

"Murdered," returned Migrayon.

Puyjoli's whole frame shook with emotion. He fastened his eyes, suddenly grown dim and haggard anxiously on Migrayon.

Murdered! Monpazier murdered—the only friend left him in the world. His brother—his only brother.

“Strangled,” continued Migrayon, gazing pityingly on the convulsed features of his master.

“Strangled! Who told you that?”

“No one. I saw him dead, with my own eyes. I happened, by chance, to make one of the crowd on the morning of the third of June, when the corpse of Monsieur le Comte was found lying on the pavement in one of the alleys which run out of the Place des Victoires. Citizen Picoulet it was, who, with the help of two others, lifted up the body from the pavement.”

“Lifted up?”—

“From the pavement, and carried it into a chemist’s shop near by. That it was a murder, the marks of fingers on the throat and bruises on the chest prove only too surely.”

Puyjoli listened, hardly believing his ears. His brother—entrapped—murdered, while he slept, most likely. It was too horrible!

“It was on the third of June, you tell me?”

“On the morning of the third of June.”

And during the night of the second Gérard had set out to find the shop of Vincent Leroux, seeking shelter. The Place des Victoires is quite near the Rue du Mail. If that wretch—but no, Germaine assured me positively that my brother never came to her father’s house. It would have been quite impossible for Gérard to have visited Leroux without his daughter knowing it. And then, too, why should Leroux have murdered him?”

Here André’s pallor, his terror on hearing Monpazier spoken of returned to Puyjoli’s memory. He was certainly extremely agitated. The Girondin—he even made

use of the word "remorse." He had heard him—remorse—why should Thorel feel remorse even if a sinister fate had overtaken Gérard. It was on that very night, also, that Thorel had come alone seeking shelter from Nicholas Pluche. Pluche was not even aware of Monpazier's existence, as it happened. At what hour had André gone to Pluche's for shelter? Was it before or after Gérard's murder? If André had been the one by whom Gérard had been done to death, or if he had had Leroux for his accomplice? After all, Monpazier could have gone to the shop, have been admitted by Leroux, without Germaine's knowing of it. "Ah, I do not know what to make of it," thought Puyjoli in despair.

Whilst Migrayon went on to relate how he had followed Gérard's body to the cemetery, where it had been taken, and had carefully marked the spot where it had been buried, through the open window came the sound of the voices of the revellers in the garden below, singing the Carmagnole loudly.

"Vive le son,
Vive le son,
Danser la Carmagnole,
Vive le son,
Du canon."

"Can you show me the spot where Gérard was buried?" asked Puyjoli of Migrayon.

"Yes, Monsieur le Vicomte," returned the other softly.

"And after I shall have prayed upon his grave, cost what it will, I will avenge his murder, if possible," returned the other.

CHAPTER V.

A DRAMA AT THE COMÉDIE.

NICHOLAS PLUCHE could not help heaving a sigh of relief when Puyjoli, and soon after him the Thorels, taking with them Verdier's child, had left his house.

He did not regret having shown them hospitality. He would do it again, if necessary ; but after all, it was like living over the crater of a volcano to shelter or harbour any person or persons denounced by the Commune.

When the Royalist and the Girondin, who at first had been inclined to fly at each other's throats, had gone, Babet began to be uneasy about them, and to wish they were under her wing once more.

"Who knows where they may be?" she inquired anxiously of her husband.

"Ah, my dear Babet, are not you rather difficult to please? When they were here you were dying to get rid of them; now that they are gone you wish them back."

"But do you think the safe-conduct of Citizen Verdier will be of service to the Thorels?"

"Of course."

"And the Viscount—what has become of him?"

"He will have found a shelter under Sophie Clerval's wing, most probably."

"What a handsome young man he was," returned Babet. "I never saw any one in my life before as beautiful."

"Take care, Babet, or I shall be growing jealous. To confess the truth, though, I am not sorry that peace has once more descended on my humble dwelling, and that I can again resume my duets with friend Maximilian."

On Médard arriving presently, the violin and flute set to work to attack bravely an aria of Glück's.

The duet finished, the two set off to the theatre. Passing by Jean-Paul Marat's house, as usual, they were astonished to find it surrounded by a great crowd. From a man who stood on the outskirts of it, they were told that Citizen Marat had just been murdered in his own house by a girl from Caen. Citizen Laurent (a porter) related to all who would stop to listen to him, that it was he who had seized the murderess and held her until the police came.

The crowd around the house howled for vengeance.

"Down with the Girondins! It is Brissot and his friends who are the authors of this deed. To the guillotine with the Federalists!"

"The devil," thought Nicholas to himself as he and Médard pushed their way with difficulty through the roaring, swaying mob. "This time Thorel's friends and colleagues have got themselves into a nice mess. Now indeed, they are lost. It is not Marat alone whom the assassin has struck down, but the whole party of the Gironde."

On his return home, some hours later, he related to Babet that the editor of the "Friend of the People" had been killed by a girl from Normandy. Her first

thought, like his, was of thankfulness that the Thorels were by this time happily out of Paris.

In order to forget as much as possible what had happened, Babet, carefully closing the shutters and bolting the door, asked her husband what had been done that afternoon at the Théâtre de la Nation.

“There was a rehearsal.”

“Of the new play?”

“Yes. Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded.”

“You told me that the author was Citizen François de Neufchâteau, former deputy of the Assembly in ’91.”

“It is adapted from the Italian, and Neufchâteau has had it lying by him since ’89. But I fear this confounded play——”

“You fear——”

“I say that I fear.”

“Are you afraid it will be hissed?”

“No. I fear rather that it will be a great success.”

“Oh, oh, if Citizen Neufchâteau were to hear you.”

“I should tell him, if I had a chance, what I tell you. I have no fault to find with the play from a literary point of view, but from a political it is the devil.”

“I do not understand you in the least.”

“Well, I had better tell you the plot, and then you will understand me. There is a count in it—Count Bonfils, who is deeply in love with Pamela, a maid in his household. He is so much in love with her that, after a struggle with himself, and as Pamela refuses to listen to any other than honourable proposals, he determines to marry her. But almost at the very moment when he is about to give his hand to Pamela, Andrews, her father, acknowledges that he is not a peasant, but the

chief of a noble Scottish family, proscribed since the rebellion in 1745."

"But," exclaimed Babet, "that is only a re-hash of Voltaire's *Nanine*."

"Yes, it is *Nanine*, but all plays resemble one another in a measure. The public like it. Anything original would alarm and disgust them. They like to welcome an old acquaintance. But you understand, Babet, that the tendency of *Pamela* is aristocratic. The personages are all noble, lords and ladies. Even *Pamela* is only a servant in disguise. And the characters are English. *Pamela*—why, that is an English name, and *Pamela's* father is Scotch. The hero—an Englishman."

Babet was silenced—convinced. If Nicholas apprehended danger it was no idle apprehension.

"Who are the players?"

"Elsie Lange will play *Pamela*. She has ordered a hat for the part which will create a furore. Molé will play old Andrews. Fleury, Lord Bonfils, and Saint Pol, Lord Arthur, friend of Lord Bonfils."

"Has Sophie Clerval a part in it?"

"No, it is lucky for her that she has not. All who play in the piece will probably be arrested and sent to prison as friends of the Girondins and Feuillants."

"*Pamela*" was brought out a fortnight later, on the first of August. The piece was a great success. The players were delighted. Mademoiselle Lange in her famous hat was dazzlingly beautiful. Behind the coulisses, Sophie Clerval was heard to remark,

"No other hat will be worn now but the '*Pamela*.'"

Babet, descending from her place in the gallery to join her husband at the door, could not help asking if he did not think his fears exaggerated. She, on her

part, was delighted with the new play. Nicholas, however owned to still feeling anxious.

On the evening of the second of August the play was denounced at the Jacobin club as being "anti-revolutionary."

On the fourth of August a decree was promulgated by the Convention, interdicting all plays from being brought out on the stage in Paris, whose tendencies were calculated to revive the former superstitious reverence for and admiration of royalty. A copy of this decree was posted immediately after its promulgation in the foyers and coulisses of the theatre. The newspapers attacked the managers of the theatre, in spite of which, however, "Pamela" was given without molestation until the night of the 28th of August.

On the morning of that day, Nicholas Pluche ran against Charles La Bussière, who was standing before a stationer's shop contemplating a picture in the show-window, of Marat on his death-bed, price one *livre*. Beneath it hung a portrait of Charlotte Corday, taken from life, as she sat writing in her prison cell, price, coloured, one *livre ten sous*.

La Bussière, with a crowd, stood gaping in the shop-window, when Pluche accosted him.

"Ah," exclaimed La Bussière, laughing and showing his white teeth; "then you have not yet been arrested, Citizen Pluche."

"I!"

"You and the other anti-revolutionists of the Théâtre de la Nation."

"Hush, speak lower," fearing La Bussière might be overheard by those around them. "There is a prospect——"

“Of your all being dragged off to prison of ‘Pamela.’”

“Who told you so?”

“I heard it discussed in the corridors of the Hall of the Committee of Public Safety. Ah, you will be taught very soon, I fancy, that one cannot meddle with fire, and escape being scorched. Well, if you are in danger, let me know, Pluche, and I will see what I can do for you.” And La Bussière sauntered off again.

Nicholas Pluche returned home very anxious. He found Médard already there, waiting to begin a duet with him.

“Ah, my friend, I have no desire for music to-day. When the thunderbolt is hanging over my head——”

“Good heavens! What new misfortune now threatens us,” exclaimed Babet, shaking in her shoes.

“Nothing, nothing,” returned Nicholas quickly, reproaching himself for alarming her, “only that Citizen Neufchâteau’s play will not be given to-night, I fancy.”

“And that is what you call a thunderbolt?”

Yes; pardon me, Babet, I have a bad habit of exaggerating, as you know.”

To calm her and drive her fears away, he consented to play his duet with Médard as usual.

That evening, just as the curtain was about to rise, there came an order from the Commune forbidding the representation. The audience was dismissed and the players left the stage. “Pamela,” however, was advertised to appear again on the second of September.

In the meantime, Neufchâteau made some changes in his drama. Pamela descended from a nobleman’s to a farmer’s daughter. The lord was made a squire. The author, too, wrote a letter to the Assembly, disclaiming all aristocratic proclivities, and all admiration for Eng-

land and the English. The interdict was, in consequence, removed, and the piece was booked for the second of September.

On the night of the representation a decree from the Assembly forbade the carrying of canes, swords or clubs by any of the audience. In front of the theatre at least a hundred carriages were drawn up. The players, delighted at the idea of acting before so select an audience, were in high feather. Everything went on well until it came Molé's turn to recite this couplet,

“The greatest coward is a persecutor,
A brave man can afford to be tolerant.”

At that there was a perfect storm of applause. A man, however, dressed in the uniform of an officer of the National Guard, hissed loudly and exclaimed,

“No! To be tolerant sometimes is to be weak!”

“Citizen,” exclaimed Fleury, the manager, advancing toward the front of the stage, “you are disturbing the representation.”

“The representation of a piece which wounds all my sensibilities. You are lauding England and the English at the very moment when the Duke of York is ravaging France!”

“Yes, yes!” cried some. Others shouted,

“No, no, put him out!”

“I am Citizen Julian de Carmtan, an aide-de-camp from the army of the Pyrenees,” exclaimed the man in uniform, “and I refuse to listen to a eulogy on the government of a York.”

“Put him out!”

“No, no! He is right!”

“Long live ‘Pamela’!”

“Long live the Republic!”

“Good God!” thought Pluche, “the thunderbolt has fallen.”

He could see from his box the officer being dragged and hustled from the theatre by some young men in evening dress. He could hear the shouts of Julian de Carmtan as he was being dragged away:—

“I shall appeal to the Jacobins—to the Jacobins—do you hear me?”

“Another piece of stupidity on the part of the manager,” thought Pluche to himself, “the theatre will certainly be closed to-morrow.”

Just then, however, Molé spoke to him,

“Come, Pluche, the row is over. Give me the cue.”

But on leaving the theatre that night, Pluche had to push himself through a group of hostile figures, and the next day Barère, in his gazette, announced that the National Theatre, which had shown itself to be everything else but National, was closed, and would remain so indefinitely.

The players, accused of “want of public spirit” were one and all (with the exception of Molé, whose patriotism was above suspicion) arrested and sent to prison; the women to Pelagie, the men to the Magdelonnettes.

Sophie Clerval, who had taken no part in ‘Pamela,’ was not molested.

“Well,” said Nicholas, philosophically, on arriving at the theatre and seeing the notice, “Closed until further notice”; “I shall have the more time on my hands to practise my duets with Maximilian,” and trotted off home again.

Arrived at his house, he was surprised to find a crowd

of excited people around the door. Among them was La Bussière, who on seeing Pluche, exclaimed,

“Do not go inside. The gens d’armes are in there, seeking you.”

“You are very kind to warn me, but I must look out for Babet.” So saying, he elbowed his way through the crowd and entered the house.

At sight of him, Babet gave a loud scream.

“You! Ah, God, I sent some one to tell you not to come home!”

“Selfish woman that you are,” exclaimed Pluche, putting his arm around her waist; “were you, then, going to prison without me?”

Just as the gens d’armes closed around him and his wife to march them off, Nicholas caught a glimpse of his friend, Maximilian Médard, standing there, pale, terror-stricken, clasping his beloved fiddle convulsively to his heart. In a voice choked with emotion he exclaimed,

“You—Pluche,—you—”

Ah, my friend, the duets are over—the music is stilled for the present at least,” returned the other, smiling sadly; then, pointing to his house, he added, quoting from the notice he had read a half hour before in the corridor of the theatre, “Closed until further notice.”

CHAPTER VI.

PUYJOLI SEEKS THOREL.

THE summer sun of 1794 beat strongly down upon the heads of the inhabitants of Paris. More than ten months had elapsed since the arrest of the players and prompter of the Théâtre de la Nation.

In December of 1793, on their presenting a petition to the National Assembly, some of the players deemed the least culpable were set at liberty by order of the Commune. Babet, however, remained shut up in Saint Pelagie, her husband at Magdelonnettes.

The days in the meanwhile went by and the months too; days and months filled with bloodshed. There was civil war in La Vendée, there was fighting with the enemy on the frontiers, there were daily deaths upon the scaffold here in Paris.

“Strike terror into the hearts of traitors and enemies,” Robespierre had commanded;—he had become all-powerful since the day of the fête of the Supreme Being, when he had marched at the head of the Convention. Terror under the name of the Law of the 22 Prairial had been voted in the Convention.

Danton was dead—a victim of the Terror. Robespierre too, unconsciously was digging his own grave.

During the winter and summer of this year, André and his wife lived hidden away in the forest *Faux Reposes* back of Montreuil, a suburb of Versailles.

They occupied two rooms in the garret of a wood-cutter's hut. André had been born in this province. The wood-cutter had known him as a child. The man lived quite alone. His wife was dead, his son a soldier in the Republican army. The Thorels had Verdier's child with them. Clotilde grew each day more and more attached to him. He was in fact a lovely child, with dark eyes and long, golden curls. André was beginning, however, to grow restless in his hiding-place. More than once he reproached himself with his cowardice in lying concealed and inactive, while every day there came tidings of his colleagues who had died for their country on the scaffold or on the battle-field.

One morning he could endure it no longer.

"I must go to Versailles," he told his wife, "cost what it may."

She at first attempted to dissuade him. Finding it impossible, she determined to accompany him. It seemed to her that if she went with him the danger threatening him would not be so great. They wandered arm-in-arm down the deserted streets of Versailles. Some placards on the public buildings announced new victories by the Army of the Rhine. Thorel's heart leaped with joy and pride as he read of this prowess of his countrymen. He pressed Clotilde's hand in his as he sighed:—

"How happy are they who with their own eyes can behold these triumphs of our soldiers."

Clotilde made haste to draw him away. They wandered sadly through the neglected and deserted gardens of the château, until they came to the Petit Trianon. Anything more melancholy than this ruin

of a palace built to enable a queen to play the rôle of dairy-maid, could not be imagined. The dairy was shut up; the windmill revolved no longer; the turf, once so velvety and smooth, was cut up and torn by the sabots of the red-capped peasants who had last encamped there.

Thorel remembered having once seen Marie Antoinette in a chintz gown and with her fair hair unpowdered, tripping lightly along these bosky alleys, a milk-pail in her hand. She was dead now—this queen—lying in an unknown grave. It seemed almost as though she had been dead a century.

* * * * *

Gaston de Puyjoli lay concealed in the dingy wine-shop on the meadow of Saint-Germaine, as Thorel in the wood-cutter's hut in the wood Faux-Reposes.

Only one thought—one longing—filled his heart, to the extinction of every other. To find Thorel, and call him to account for his brother's murder.

Puyjoli, assured of Bertha's safety, went no longer to Sophie's, fearing to compromise both women by his visits there.

One sultry evening in June, Leroux and his daughter, sitting silently together,—she, pale, haggard, the ghost of her former self, were surprised by a visit from Puyjoli.

A cry of terror escaped the girl's lips at the sight of him, while her father recoiled as though confronted by an apparition from the grave.

Germaine's voice, greeting in trembling tones the new-comer, forced him to recover by a supreme effort his self-control.

Though younger and much handsomer than his

brother, yet Puyjoli's voice and smile recalled vividly those of the murdered man. Leroux's heart leaped into his throat as Puyjoli, without any preamble, began :

"You understand why I have come here?"

"No," stammered the other.

Germaine, from whose face every vestige of colour had flown, had arisen from her chair, and stood leaning with her back against the chimney-piece, trembling in every limb.

"I have come here to ask you about my brother."

"Your brother!"

"Gérard de Monpazier was my brother. He was found dead, murdered, in the Place des Victoires on the morning after he had gone in search of your house. He had been directed here the night before, by André Thorel, the Girondin."

Germaine listened, stupefied, to Puyjoli's words. "Why had he come there," she asked herself, "to accuse her father of having murdered his brother?"

Her father's eyes turned gloomily in her direction as he answered sullenly :

"I know nothing of your brother."

"He did not come here then?"

"No."

Puyjoli continued, almost as though speaking to himself :—

"He must have been on his way here, certainly. His dead body was found not far away from here, in an alley leading into the Place des Victoires."

Leroux, not looking at Puyjoli, but gazing at his daughter's face as a criminal might look on the judge about to pass sentence of death upon him, went on to

explain that Monpazier might have been set upon and attacked by foot-pads on his way to the Rue du Mail.

"Thorel," Puyjoli interrupted him, "says he gave Gérard his card to give you, and my brother had both money and papers on his person, as I happen to know. But when Gérard's body was picked up in the street, there were neither papers nor valuables upon him."

"He was murdered probably for his money," returned Leroux, with a calmness perfectly amazing to his daughter.

"What is there to prevent my believing that my brother was murdered by the very man who pretended to succour him? Who else knew of his having a large sum of money upon his person?"

"I do not understand," stammered Leroux.

"In times like these, whom can one trust? How can one tell who are one's friends? Gérard confided in and trusted Thorel. He placed his life in the other's hands. What if it should be Thorel himself by whom Gérard met his death? if he did not kill him, by closing his door against his friend—by sending him to wander about the streets of Paris seeking shelter. Was not he the cause of my brother's losing his life?"

Germaine uttered a piercing cry.

"He suspects," she moaned, "he suspects André Thorel."

"Why," protested Leroux, "why suspect Thorel of a crime he is incapable of?"

"Because he lied to me. He told me my brother was safe in your house."

"He probably thought so. As I told you before, your brother was on the way hither."

"Thorel is a coward," returned the other hotly;

“he found a shelter for himself, but deserted his friend. He left him to traverse the streets of Paris where death lurked for him at every corner, and *he* is alive—but my brother is dead—murdered. I am, however, searching for him, and when I find him, he shall account to me for his base desertion of my brother, his friend.”

Leroux's blood seemed turning to ice as he listened to this denunciation of Thorel from the lips of his victim's brother. He glanced piteously at his daughter, who, with set, rigid features, stood there, gazing blankly at Puyjoli.

She made haste to get rid of him. She could endure the scene no longer. She bit her lips till the blood ran. She was afraid she might in a moment of madness betray her father.

Her condition was so pitiable that Puyjoli himself was struck by it. He held out his hand in farewell to her. She shuddered and drew back.

“Have you forgotten that we were once friends?” he inquired, smiling sadly.

“No,” she answered quickly, and laid her hand in his outstretched one. It was burning with fever.

“You are not well?” he inquired anxiously, “your hand is burning hot.”

“Is it?” she returned indifferently, while her father looked at them gloomily. She had loved this man once, her father told himself. She would have been happy, could she have gone on loving him, even without hope, happy—and yet it was to assure her happiness, to insure her peace and plenty, that he had committed a crime.

“Ah, what torture life is to me,” he exclaimed

hoarsely, when he and his daughter were alone once more. "I wish I were dead. But I will not die as a murderer. I am none. I did not intend to kill him. I did not know what I did," he spoke more to himself than to her.

She made no answer, but tottered past him out of the room.

Left alone, Leroux stretched one of his brawny hands toward the decanter full of brandy which stood on the buffet. He swallowed glass after glass of the fiery liquid. His visage, but now so sombre, lighted up. He muttered to himself, "Well, what if I did kill him—the aristocrat—the traitor? Have not I kept the papers he had hidden away in his pistol, the pistol he would have killed me with, had not I strangled the life out of him with my hands? I only performed an act of justice, justice, justice, such as Sanson performs every day on a batch of traitors and aristocrats. I saved Sanson and his assistants a job. How funny it was, though, to hear the brother—the handsome young *ci-devant*—denouncing Thorel to me as his brother's murderer. André Thorel a murderer—the young idiot!"

Puyjoli returned to his lodgings at Truelle's, longing to call André to account for his brother's untoward fate; André, who, in his seclusion in the forest Faux-Reposes, longed for tidings of his friend and reproached himself bitterly for having allowed him to go alone to Leroux's.

One July morning, Thorel, at work over his papers in his garret, heard the tramp of soldiers, marching along the road running in the direction of Versailles. Clotilde entered the room directly after, pale and terror-stricken, exclaiming,

"Did you hear?"

"Yes."

"Soldiers——"

"A detachment of troops marching through the forest."

Verdier's child now came running up the stair. Some peasants at work in the forest had told him that the soldiers were on the march toward Bretagne. They were not visible from the windows of the house, as it was set back some distance from the road and hidden by the trees. The soldiers marched along, singing the *Çaira*.

Suddenly the loud voice of the captain crying, "Halt!" shook the walls.

"They are going to encamp here," whispered Clotilde, with white lips.

"I do not think so, we are too near Versailles. It is simply a halt."

She crept closer to him, winding her arms around his neck.

"If they should come here to search for you, you will resist them?"

"How can I? They are a hundred to one. But have no fear. Why should they come here? They are on their march to the front."

The shouts and loud laughter of the soldiers seemed now very near. Verdier's child had left the room again, without their perceiving it. His voice in tones of agony and fear was now heard.

"Something has happened to the child!" exclaimed André, unwinding his wife's clinging arms and going towards the door.

"Where are you going, André?" she asked anxiously.

“To see what has happened to the little one.”

“André, do not go. Let me go—if you are seen——”

Again the cries, sharper and more agonised, were heard.

“The child is being tortured,” returned André, “by those brutes. His father saved our lives, and shall we now allow any danger to befall his child, without at least trying to save him?”

They found that the captain of the company had caught sight of the little fellow peeping through the trees to look at the soldiers passing by, had had him brought to him, and was endeavouring to make the little one tell where and with whom he lived in the forest. He had caught hold of the child’s wrists with his hands, and was wrenching them so brutally, that tears rolled down the little one’s face and cries of agony fell from his lips, although he still refused to answer any of the questions put to him.

“Ah, mustard-seed,” exclaimed the brute, “you would rather not say! What words are these to use to me?”

“You hurt me, you hurt me!” cried the child, trying vainly to free himself. “You wicked, cruel man!”

André stepped forward, “Shame upon you!” he exclaimed, white with anger, “a soldier—and maltreat a child!”

The man, astonished, let go his hold, and the little one fled to Clotilde for protection.

“Who are you?” inquired the captain, measuring Thorel from head to foot with a look of ferocious disdain, “his father?”

“No, but I shall not suffer you to ill-treat him.”

“*You* will not suffer me, Citizen, did you say?” returned the other, grinning savagely. “Your name?”

“My name does not concern you.”

“Who are you who hide away in the depths of this forest—you are probably a traitor, a spy.”

“Captain,” exclaimed one of the soldiers here, “he is a Girondin, a member of the Convention. I have often seen him on the tribune of the Hall of the Convention.”

“A Girondin!” returned the leader, laying his hand on his sword. “The Girondins have all been denounced as traitors to the Republic months ago in the Convention.”

A circle of menacing faces and burly forms now pressed close around Thorel, his wife and the child. And Thorel finding the time for all concealment was past, exclaimed boldly,

“I am André Thorel—former deputy from Versailles to the Convention.”

“Denounced—proscribed!” resounded on all sides. “Down with the Girondin!”

Still, the demeanour of the man was so firm and courageous that many could not withhold their admiration.

“A brave man,” muttered the soldier who had denounced him.

“Well,” exclaimed the captain, with a sneer, “I shall send you back to Paris with a squad of soldiers, and the Convention will mete out to you the same justice it has meted to your brother-Girondins. Sergeant, get twenty men, and take this man with the woman and child, back to Versailles.”

“This child is not mine,” returned Thorel. “He is the son of Publicola Verdier, president of Section L.”

“Don’t know him,” interrupted the captain.

"Probably not. He is a brave man and a patriot. But this child must be sent back in safety to his father."

"Rascal, do you bandy words with me? Sergeant, see to your prisoners."

André lifted the child in his arms, and with his wife by his side was marched off in the direction of Versailles. He was bare-headed, but the soldier who had recognised him came running after him with his hat.

"Forgive me, Citizen," said the man remorsefully, "my tongue ran away with me just now."

"Thank you," returned André.

"It is not thanks," returned the other, "I want, but pardon."

"Oh, well, I forgive you," answered André, holding out his hand to him.

"Silence in the ranks!" commanded the captain.

Clotilde walked alone by her husband's side, pale, rigid, oblivious to all that was going on around her.

CHAPTER VII.

CITIZEN LA BUSSIÈRE'S PLANS.

SINCE the closing of the Théâtre de la Nation, Sophie Clerval had been playing with her fellow-player, Molé, at the National Theatre in the Rue de la Loi, under the management of Citizeness Montansier, former directress of the Queen's Theatre at Versailles.

It was a huge, wooden amphitheatre, where plays were acted, balls were held, and where in the spring and summer months, Citizen Franconi held his circus.

Her fellow-players could not help noticing how pale, grave, sad almost, Sophie had grown during the last few months. She was in fact pining for Puyjoli—for Puyjoli, who did not care for her—who had never loved her, but who loved instead this woman whom she, Sophie, sheltered under her roof. This haughty, aristocratic young beauty, who obstinately persisted in committing daily a thousand imprudences, thereby endangering not only her own life, but that of her protectress.

Sophie would preach patience, caution, the necessity of not drawing attention on herself and her father day after day, but in vain. She herself had resolved to leave the theatre where she was engaged for her former one, now called the Théâtre de l'Égalité. It was under the direction of the Section Marat, and the pieces to be represented there were to be patriotic, designed to educate the popular taste.

The walls of the hall were painted in tri-colour, statues of Reason, Nature, Liberty, Equality, ornamented the corridors and staircases. In niches were set busts of Marat, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Barrère and others. Sophie appeared in the character of Equality in a play written for her by Darvigny on the 9th Messidor, year II, according to the placards.

Never had she looked more beautiful, never had she been more enthusiastically received, but on going the next night to the theatre, the audience were amazed to hear that Sophie Clerval, beautiful Sophie, patriotic Sophie had been arrested the night before as she was leaving the playhouse.

Sophie Clerval—arrested! And why? It was really incredible! Who now could be trusted? The actress, however, who played Equality, whose Republicanism had never been doubted, it had been discovered had for months past secreted in her apartment the daughter of a nobleman, the *ci-devant* Marquis de Louverchal, himself a prisoner at Saint Lazare.

Sophie had, it seemed, prophesied only too truly. Bertha had allowed herself to be seen in the streets, had been followed, watched, tracked to Sophie's dwelling, and denounced before the Section Marat. A domiciliary visit had been paid to the actress's apartment, and Bertha and she carried off to prison.

This arrest of a beautiful and favourite actress had fairly stupefied Paris. Gaston de Puyjoli learned of it the next day by means of a placard pasted up on a building in the suburb where he lodged.

He at first could not believe it possible, but Migrayon, coming in afterwards, confirmed the truth of the report. Sophie and Mademoiselle de Louverchal had been

carried off to the Saint Lazare prison, the prison where now the 'suspects' were confined. Bertha's father was there.

Puyjoli was in despair at the thought of Bertha's being in prison—Bertha! He saw her again as she appeared to him on the first day he had seen her and fallen in love with her. Her fresh, bright face, her pretty, powdered head, her saucy smile.

"Poor, poor girl," he sighed; he had for some time back imagined that he had ceased to love her, but that was a mistake. He should never cease to love her—this charming Bertha whom he had sworn to win. Yes, to-day, or ten years from to-day, and the oath he had sworn to her in Perigueux resounded again in his ears—this time like the tolling of a knell. In Paris or in Peking—alas, a greater gulf separated them now than the seas which separate France from China—the gulf of death. Bertha dead, thought Puyjoli, with a shudder. Ah, if he could but throw himself between death and her! Well, he could try.

He called Migrayon, and gave him money to settle with the Truelles, who were kind people. "For you, my lad," he added, taking off the seal ring he wore, "take this as a souvenir. If you should ever be in want of money you ought to be able to get a good sum for this. It came from the cabinet of M. le Comte de Caylus, who was a judge of cameos."

Migrayon was stupefied. What did Monsieur le Vicomte mean by these words? Were they a farewell?

"One can say farewell when one is only going on a short journey, my good Migrayon, and I am going to the prison of Saint Lazare to catch sight——"

"To the faubourg St. Denis? It is frightfully imprudent, my lord. You wish——"

"To see Mademoiselle de Louverchal again, my friend."

Puyjoli, as the valet well knew, was not one who could be persuaded to let an undertaking drop, which he had made up his mind to carry out. The man sighed and shook his head sadly, but did not venture a word of remonstrance.

Puyjoli walked through the streets of Paris on his way to Saint Lazare like a man in a dream. His thoughts were far away; away in the pleasant peaceful day of his life in Perigord. He awoke from his reveries only to find the frowning gray walls of the prison confronting him. Raising his voice, he called out to a sentinel standing at the gate:—

"Let me in there."

"No one can pass here," returned the man, staring at him.

Puyjoli came close up to him, smiling.

"I wish to enter the prison, my friend."

"Have you an order to admit you?" inquired the sentinel.

"No."

"Then you cannot enter. Be off with you."

"I have friends, prisoners inside there, I tell you. I must go in."

"Friends! Are you fool enough to acknowledge you have friends in there? Why, you are mad!"

"He is out of his head," said some persons, who, attracted by the altercation with the sentinel, had come up and were looking on curiously.

"He does not know what he is saying," exclaimed

a woman, carrying a child in her arms. "Poor fellow, fear has made him mad!"

"My friends," returned Puyjoli, turning round and bowing to them, still with a smile on his fresh, handsome face, "do I look like a madman? I am only tired of keeping the gentlemen waiting who have done me the honour to denounce me months ago. I wish to enter the prison. I have come here to give myself up."

The crowd, growing larger every moment, seemed thunder-struck at Puyjoli's calmness.

"It is a physician he wants, poor young man," exclaimed the woman who had spoken before. "His handsome head has been turned by the 'Terror.'"

"How beautiful he is!" exclaimed a young girl by her side. "He is like a picture!"

"Too beautiful Puyjoli," muttered the Viscount, between his clenched teeth. "Damn it, am I to hear that cursed phrase under the guillotine itself, I wonder?" Then, raising his voice, he cried out to another sentinel who had come to see why a crowd had collected around the prison-gates,

"I am the Viscount de Puyjoli, 'suspect' a year or more, denounced in every Section in Paris. By arresting me, you will be doing the Republic a service." Then, as no one moved to lay a hand on him, he exclaimed passionately, "Who said that one needs only to be an aristocrat to be arrested in Paris? It is a lie! I am an aristocrat, a noble, the son of a noble, a scion of nobles, and not one of you dares lay hands on me. Long live the King! Down with Robespierre and——" The sentinel laid his hand on him.

"Idiot!" he cried, "Come with me."

Puyjoli heard the heavy gates of Saint Lazare clang behind him, with ineffable joy. In a voice clear, resonant, joyous, he replied to the head-jailer, sitting in his office, who inquired his name.

"Gaston Armand Leon de Saint Alvère, Viscount de Puyjoli."

The man wrote down stolidly in the great ledger before him.

"Citizen Saint-Alvère, calling himself Viscount."

At this very hour, Clotilde Thorel was distracted with grief at being separated from her husband, who had been shut up in prison on their arrival in Paris, while she, with Verdier's child, had been allowed to go free.

The week after, she had seen her husband's name in the list of those condemned to death. His and Nicholas Pluche's. What to do! To whom could she now turn for mercy, for help for André.

She determined to apply to the Committee of Public Safety, which held its sittings in the Tuileries. On her way thither she encountered La Bussière, who was employed there as clerk of registry.

Clotilde, perceiving her former neighbour, and knowing he held a post on the Committee, greeted him, and in a few hesitating words, explained her errand there, imploring him to aid her.

At sight of her La Bussière, usually bold and resolute, experienced sensations strongly resembling timidity. He had never before in his wild, reckless career known a good woman, tender and faithful, brave and yet modest. "Ah," he thought to himself, "if she had been my wife how I would have loved and cherished her!" He invited her to go with him into the garden,

and they seated themselves on one of the benches beneath a chestnut tree.

"Citizen," she began, "I beseech you to help me. My husband is in prison, condemned to death."

"I know it."

"Cannot you help me to save him?"

"I?" exclaimed La Bussière, "for whom do you take me, Citizeness? I am a clerk in the Bureau of the Committee. My powers are, unfortunately, very limited. At present I am given the task of registering the names of those imprisoned, and I have also to take copies of the death-warrants. I am a copyist, that is all."

"But you have the names of all those accused?"

"Yes."

"You know by whom they have been accused?"

"Without doubt."

"Could not you at least plead the cause of those unjustly accused before your official superiors?"

Charles La Bussière shrugged his shoulders.

"I can do nothing, nothing but give you a piece of advice, Citizeness. The warrants for his arrest and his execution have not as yet been sent to my bureau."

"To-day, yes, but to-morrow in all probability you will receive them," returned Clotilde, in despairing accents.

La Bussière was penetrated to the heart by the sight of the anguish of this woman whom he secretly loved. He longed to be able to say to her:—

"Trust to me. I would give my life for you. To save your husband, I will risk my own life." But prudence, common-sense restrained him from making a

promise of which he saw no prospect of fulfilment; he could only reiterate, sadly :

“I can do nothing. I am nothing.”

Clotilde left him and returned, mad with grief, to her lodging.

But a project to save Thorel and his friends, the players, was being evolved in La Bussière's mind.

There was a chance, one chance in a thousand, by which they might escape death. It would be in the highest degree dangerous, almost foolhardy, to attempt to set this plan into execution. La Bussière, however, determined to do it.

One of his duties was to advertise in the different newspapers in Paris the arrests and condemnation of those in other cities of the different departments in the Provinces.

“And upon my word,” said La Bussière to himself, “I see nobody but gendarmes, and nothing but warrants.”

He made up his mind therefore, to destroy secretly the death-warrants of his friends. He occupied an office by himself. When the death-warrants were registered by him, they were then sent on to Fouquier Tinville, who ordered the condemned to be taken to La Conciergerie, if they were not already there, and on the morning after being sent there, they were carried off to the guillotine.

In the fantastic brain of the former actor, an obstinate idea had for some time back entered. The Republican often asked himself what gain could it be for the Republic to put to death a few innocent players and Nicholas Pluche, the former prompter of the theatre, La Bussière's old neighbour.

“Yes, indeed,” he thought, “after the blood of Danton and that of Camille Desmoulins, of Anacharsis Clootz and Chaumette has flowed on the altar of Liberty, is not the sacrifice sufficient? It is time for the shedding of innocent blood to cease.” But, alas, it had not ceased. Day after day the warrants which he had to register came thicker and thicker. Day after day he brooded over this idea, and in the night he lay awake, hour after hour, puzzling how he should carry it out. A letter which he caught sight of accidentally one day, from Collot d’Herbois to Fougquier Tinville, urging him to greater zeal, spurred him on. It had come in a bundle of letters to the Committee of Safety. If this letter never reached the one to whom it was addressed, the players’ lives might for a time at least be spared.

“Impossible,” he decided sadly—but on reflection, why impossible? The business of the Committee grew every day heavier. The death-warrants came thicker and thicker. Sanson and his assistants bitterly complained of being overworked.

From the bundle of papers La Bussière contrived to extract this letter and some of the warrants without being discovered. He pushed them back into the drawer of his desk and re-tied the package carefully.

During the night he returned to his bureau, eluding the one sentinel on guard, and opened the door of his office with the key he carried always about him. There, groping about in the dark, he rummaged in the drawer, succeeded in laying his hand on the letter and the death-warrants, and hid them on his person. It was about one in the morning when he stole from the place, and going to a swimming-bath on the Seine, demanded

a room in it. In the water of the bath, he soaked the parchments until they were reduced to a pulp and rolled this pulp into small balls, which he threw out of the window into the Seine. On his way home from the bath he met Publicola Verdier returning from a meeting of the Marat Section.

"Ah," exclaimed La Bussière, eagerly. "it is a long time since I saw you. What are you doing?"

"Working."

"Are you satisfied with the Republic yet?"

"It needs more friends like me, and it has too many half-hearted ones like——"

"Whom?"

"Like those who regret the past, and long for a return to the former tyranny. From the barber on the corner, who sighs for noblemen's wigs to curl and power, to the farmer-general and the financier who desired to have again the privilege of taxing and grinding down the poor. But, though the Red Book is, thanks to us, closed, in which were kept accounts of the pensions paid to the mistresses of kings and princes, there are some who would like to have it opened again——"

"I do not think so, but the people are growing tired of so much bloodshed. It is time to show mercy——"

"Mercy!" interrupted the Jacobin, "did the aristocrats ever show mercy to the people?"

"Is there really none you would pardon?"

"Not one."

"But the young, the thoughtless, those whose birth is their only crime."

"Let them all perish," returned the Jacobin.

"And you would spare none?"

“Not one.”

La Bussière shook his head. “Yet with my own eyes I saw you give your safe-conduct to Thorel.”

“Thorel, though a Girondin, was no aristocrat, only a weak patriot, and then for her sake, who saved my child from death. It was an act of gratitude toward her.”

“You know, I suppose, that Thorel has been arrested, condemned?”

“Yes. My child was brought back to me by Thorel’s wife.”

“Can not you interpose, and save Thorel’s life again?”

Citizen Verdier shook his head.

“He dies, perhaps, to-morrow, and the blade of the guillotine will most probably the day after to-morrow cut short the cry of ‘Vive la République’ in my own throat. What does it matter? Our blood will fertilize the soil in which the tree of liberty is planted. I pity Thorel——”

“You will not make at least one effort to save him?”

“Yesterday it was possible. To-day no power on earth can save him. Above the power of Human Will is that of the Law.”

“But above the Law,” thought La Bussière, as saying farewell to Verdier, he went on his way, “there is Mercy.”

CHAPTER VIII.

S A I N T L A Z A R E.

SINCE that terrible date of the 19th Messidor (June) this prison had been full to overflowing with prisoners of all ages, ranks, and conditions. Nobles of the ancient régime, Chouans, Feuillants, Girondins, soldiers, priests and women. Persons accused of conspiring against the Government, alleged spies of Pitt and the English Government. In this crowd, waiting in the prison ante-chamber of death, as it was to be to the most of the prisoners, certain distinctions of society still reigned.

The nobles held themselves proudly aloof from the other prisoners. Many still kept up a semblance of their former state. Some had their days on which to pay and receive visits; they conversed, made witticisms and epigrams on the very judges and juries who had condemned them. They acted plays, gave concerts. They did not hesitate, either, to give a mimic representation of an execution upon the guillotine.

These light-hearted Frenchmen could not even take death seriously.

Gaston de Puyjoli's first thought was to seek for Bertha in this crowd. He succeeded in finding her at last, with her father. The Marquis, not in the least prepared to meet death as a philosopher, in fact not desiring at all to meet it, experienced something almost like pleasure at seeing Puyjoli once more. To do the Marquis

justice, however, he thought that Gaston had come simply to visit him; he had no idea they were fellow-prisoners. Bertha, quicker of comprehension, divined the truth and was deeply shocked and pained at seeing him there.

"Ah, Viscount," she exclaimed mournfully, "the only comfort left me was that you at least were not in this horrible place."

"*Ma foi*," he returned smiling, "you have no idea how lonely I was outside. All my world is here, and you could not expect me to live outside the world, could you? Oh!" he exclaimed, interrupting himself suddenly, "there is somebody yonder whom I did not expect to meet here."

He gazed with a hard and severe look in the direction of a man seated on a straw-seated chair, a short distance off, his legs crossed, and who, quite regardless of the hubbub around him, was reading diligently. This expression of severity accorded so ill with his handsome features that Bertha stared at him in astonishment.

"*Vive Dieu*," said Puyjoli to himself, "it is certainly Citizen Thorel. Chance has this time favoured me indeed." Turning toward the Marquis and his daughter and forcing a smile, he added, "I have a word to say to that man yonder. May I be allowed to come later and pay my respects to you?"

"What can you have to say to him?" exclaimed the Marquis, "it is André Thorel, the Girondin."

"I have a word to speak with him, nevertheless, but it will not take me long."

He strode up to where André was seated and laid his hand heavily on his shoulder.

Thorel started as though awakening from a dream. A

smile illuminated his sad face as he looked up and saw Puyjoli standing before him. He got off his chair quickly, and held out both hands to the new-comer.

“It is written, then, that we are to meet again and here. I could wish that it had been anywhere else.”

The cold, haughty look which met his own, the refusal of the hand of his former friend, filled him with amazement. He gazed half-wonderingly, half-pityingly at the proud, handsome face confronting him so sternly. Puyjoli had planted himself before Thorel in an attitude at once defiant and menacing.

“I have a word to say to you, Monsieur le Girondin,” he began slowly, “I have come here to ask you what you have done with my brother.”

“Done with your brother?”

“I have no desire to waste many words on you. My brother was murdered. He was murdered on the very night he had the misfortune to encounter you in Paris.”

“Murdered! Gérard! Good God.”

“My brother had no other friend in all Paris besides you. He left me to seek shelter with you. You shut the door in his face.”

“Shut the door in his face! Had not I to flee myself by night from my own house, to avoid being made a prisoner in it? I sent him to a house where I knew he would be as safe as with me.”

“He never reached that house. He was found the next morning strangled to death in an alley. You were the last who saw him alive.”

It was now quite clear to Thorel that Puyjoli's brain was turned. His grief for his brother had driven him mad. He gazed at the young man before him with sad, pitying eyes.

“I wish to know why you,” continued Puyjoli, lowering his voice, but speaking in fierce, distinct tones, “why you deserted my brother that night, while you sought alone a shelter for your cowardly head?”

“Silence!” returned the other, sternly, “You do not know what you are saying. I send Gérard to his death? I, who loved him better than my own life?”

“We shall both of us in all probability, soon be called to die upon the scaffold. I die innocent of any crime, but you will meet your just due as an assassin—of your friend.”

“Look at me,” exclaimed André, impetuously, “look me full in the face, and say if I look like an assassin?” His blue eyes looked so bravely, so calmly, into the threatening orbs confronting them, that Puyjoli was shaken in his convictions in spite of himself.

“Is it possible that I have accused him unjustly?” he thought; “he was Gérard’s dearest friend.”

“Then defend yourself,” he returned, after a moment’s hesitancy. “Who killed my brother? Who killed him, I say?”

“How can I tell?” returned the other, a feeling of angry shame burning hot within, at being called to defend himself from a charge at once so infamous and absurd. “There is not a patriot I know capable of the deed of which you accuse me. I was ignorant until you told me just now of Gérard’s death. I could not shelter him in my house, but was that my fault? You were there that very night. You must have seen the guards sent there to place me under arrest. How is it possible for you to accuse Clotilde’s husband and your brother’s friend of being a murderer, the assassin of his friend. There is but one way left me now to avenge

your insults, and that is to forgive them." He turned away as he spoke, leaving Gaston gazing blankly after him.

During the weary months following his crime, Leroux and his daughter dragged on their miserable lives, face to face in the old house. Germaine was but a spectre of her former self, haggard, woe-worn; the sight of her was a continued penance to the miserable father. For oblivion—for temporary relief from an avenging conscience, he fled to the brandy-bottle. His face was congested, his eyes bloodshot, the veins in his thick neck swollen.

"Some morning," he would say to himself moodily, "I shall be found dead in my bed, of apoplexy." How he longed and hoped for such a death! The crime of which he had been guilty, he told himself repeatedly, he had committed for his daughter's sake, that she might be assured of an existence free from want; and now, it appeared to him, she was dying daily before his eyes. Dying of horror and despair. Thin as a shadow, her once tall figure bent like that of an aged person's, she crept about the house and shop. "Wretch, this is your work!" he told himself. Again and again when alone in his chamber he put Gérard's pistol to his forehead; again and again he withdrew it. An assassin, a murderer he was none, he repeated obstinately. It was only justice he had done on that traitor, that aristocrat. He need only take these papers he had found concealed in Monpazier's pistol to the Committee of Public Safety, and avow boldly what he had done, to be not only exonerated, but rewarded as a patriot, a second Brutus, rewarded beyond his wildest dreams. Why then, should he put an end to his life in a fit of remorse?

Ah, he knew only too well that the love of his child, the sole thing he had longed for in this world, had forever departed from him. She pitied, but she shrank from him. Every fibre, every nerve in her body recoiled from the contact of his guilty touch.

Often in the depths of the night he had heard her weeping in her chamber. Each low, suppressed sob of hers was like a dagger-stroke in his heart. "Wretch," he would then apostrophize himself, "this is your work; you have blasted her sweet, innocent young life."

One morning at breakfast, a meal partaken of by them in almost unbroken silence, Leroux asked his daughter abruptly,

"What would you do, where would you go if—I were dead?"

Germaine, lifting the heavy lids of her sunken eyes, looked at him wonderingly. He repeated his question as she made no answer.

Slowly, and as if forced by his imperious gaze against her will to reply, she said,

"If I were alone in the world, I would go as a nurse in the hospitals."

"Ah," he exclaimed suddenly, "so you have already thought what you would do?"

"No, no, father," she replied, "never until this moment."

"Well," he answered gloomily, "you may not have long to wait."

A coldness as of death stole over her at these ominous words; her blue, trembling lips found it impossible to form a word, either of dissent or of entreaty. Leroux pushed back his chair, and, coming over to her, bent his head over hers.

“I have a boon to ask of you.”

“A boon?”

“A kiss.”

She lifted up her white face to his and he pressed his burning lips to her clammy forehead. Then, taking her hand in both his, he murmured softly, “Adieu.”

Germaine fell back half fainting in her chair. The whole room reeled. She made an effort to rise and follow her father, who had left the room, but her weak, trembling limbs refused the task.

The next moment the sound of a shot from the shop below fell on her ears. With a supreme effort she arose, tottered to the door and slowly descended the staircase.

A light blue cloud of smoke floated slowly upward toward the ceiling. The smell of powder was perceptible. “He has killed himself,” she moaned. Her eyes, dim with tears, sought him anxiously. There, on the very spot in the recess where Gérard had lain, she saw her father’s body, prostrate on the floor.

With a cry of love and pity, she cast herself down beside him, raising his head on her arm. Her father’s hand, groping blindly, sought hers; she caught it, raining tears and kisses on it. He smiled faintly, turned his eyes toward her, and died.

The pistol with which he had killed himself lay near him. Around the handle a piece of paper was wound. Unfolding it with shaking fingers, Germaine read,

‘To whom it may concern—I tried to fight against ill fortune. In vain. I have come to the end of my resources; I have no hope of ever retrieving my losses. I must die.’

Below was written, "To my daughter—Forgive me, I have suffered so much, and I loved you so much.

VINCENT LEROUX.

She hid the paper away in her bosom. For hours she sat there alone—the head of the dead man in her lap.

* * * * *

The next morning at the prison, Gaston was given a small package by the jailer, who said it had been left at the grill for him by a young woman. On opening it, he found it to contain his brother's pistol, and a few written words from Germaine.

"You came to me to know what had become of your brother. This pistol was found among the effects of my dead father. Pray for him and pardon him.

GERMAINE."

So Gérard had gone to Leroux's and had been murdered by the draper, it seemed. Here, with a great rush of remorse, Puyjoli remembered the insults he had heaped on André, the true and faithful friend of Gérard. He went in search of the Girondin, the pistol in one hand. "Poor Germaine," he thought, divining what she must have suffered since that night, that dreadful night. Germaine, so beautiful, so good. So engrossed was he in his thoughts, that he fairly stumbled over the man he was seeking. Holding out his hands, he exclaimed in clear tones, loud enough to be heard by all around them;

"Citizen Thorel, I have come to beg your pardon. I insulted you by a wrong and unjust accusation. I beg you to pardon it, to forgive it if you can. My brother

is dead, and I too, am going to my death. The news came yesterday that to-morrow I am to be transferred to La Conciergerie. Will you, therefore, grant me your forgiveness before I die?"

André sprang forward and threw his arms around the other's neck.

"I have nothing to forgive. You are going to meet Gérard. I, in all probability, will soon follow you both."

"Say farewell to me then, now, dear friend," returned Puyjoli, "for there is still left me another duty to perform before I die."

Their adieus over, Puyjoli hurried to the cell of the Marquis de Louverchal. Bertha sat on a low chair there, engaged in netting.

Puyjoli greeted them, faintly smiling.

"Monsieur le Marquis," he began, after seating himself in the only remaining chair there; "I have a favour to ask of you and Mademoiselle, the last I shall ever crave. That the desire of my whole life, just as my life is ended, may be fulfilled. Let me marry Mademoiselle here—and now."

"What a ridiculous idea," grumbled the Marquis, "a marriage in a dungeon. It is folly—madness—I will not consent to it."

"Consent, father," whispered Bertha, who had left her chair and come up to her father's side. She held out her hand as she spoke to Puyjoli. He fell on his knees and raised it to his lips.

Her eyes looked down on the beautiful up-turned face of her lover, beautiful, fresh, radiant as ever, and a great wave of bitterness, of self-disgust, swept over her. At last she saw herself as she was. She, who had

scoffed and spurned this faithful lover—a lover of whom a queen herself might have been proud. The tears streamed down her cheeks.

“My love, my love,” she whispered, stooping down, and taking his face between her hands, she pressed kiss after kiss upon it, her father staring at her wonder-stricken.

“Ah,” murmured Puyjoli softly, “you love me. What a pity it is that the knowledge of it comes just a little late.”

Yet he was fairly beside himself with joy. His blue eyes sparkled through tears of happiness. The dark shadow of death enveloping him had no power to chill or lessen in any way his joy.

“If you could know,” he whispered, “how this moment makes amends for all my years of loving and waiting; and now I must tell you, dear, that I had myself arrested to be near you.”

The Marquis cast up his arms and eyes heavenward at these words. Bertha’s tears fell faster than ever.

“You gave up your liberty, your life, to be near me?”

“My life! My life was no life at all away from you.”

“Ah,” exclaimed the girl, throwing herself with a sudden passionate gesture upon his breast, “do you know that I adore you?”

A half hour afterward, Puyjoli and Bertha were married by a priest in her father’s cell. Two friends of the Marquis’s were witnesses of the marriage. Hardly were their names written down on the document which the priest had drawn up as a certificate of the marriage, when a hoarse voice was heard calling through the prison corridors, “The ci-devant Vicomte de Puyjoli.”

Gaston threw back his head.

"The devil!" he muttered, "but the death-summons follows hard upon the marriage-vows."

Drawing his wife to his bosom, he pressed kiss after kiss upon her lips.

"Pujoli, the ci-devant," again echoed through the corridors.

"In a year—or ten, did not I vow to you, you should be mine? And yet you are not mine——"

"Pujoli," again the call was repeated.

"I am coming," he answered.

With a supreme effort, releasing himself from Bertha's clinging arms, blind, deaf, to all about him, he ran stumbling from the cell.

Again the hoarse voice called, "The ci-devant Marquis de Louverchal."

Bereft of both father and husband, Bertha sank fainting into the arms of the Countess de Seillère, one of the witnesses to her marriage.

At the gate of the prison a crowd was gathered, a crowd of condemned persons who were to be taken from Saint-Lazare to La Conciergerie, and thence to the guillotine.

As Pujoli stood there, a hand was laid on his shoulder, and a voice, clear, sweet, vibrant, contrasting oddly with the sobs, cries and groans around them, exclaimed gaily:

"Ah, good day, Viscount."

Turning quickly, he beheld Sophie Clerval standing before him. Sophie, who having suffered from indisposition since her imprisonment, had kept to her cell, and of whose presence there Pujoli was not even aware. The actress was in a dressing-gown, not even

having been given time to change her dress before leaving the prison.

“Gaston,” she said, in thrilling, vibrant tones, “I did not know we were fellow-prisoners; we, it seems, are to make the journey to the scaffold together.”

A great rush of pity and remorse filled Puyjoli’s heart at the sight of her. She, so beautiful, so young, the darling of the populace, the woman who had loved him and whom he had despised, she was giving her life not even for him she loved (that poor comfort was denied her) but for her rival, her successful rival. And he, ingrate that he was, had quite forgotten her. He had even forgotten that she had been thrown into prison at the same time with Bertha; her only crime that of having sheltered at his entreaty the woman he loved. He caught her hand in his and raised it devoutly to his lips.

“Sophie,” he murmured in a heart-broken voice, “forgive me. I knew not—I knew not what I did.”

“Forgive you,” she exclaimed with a smile almost divine, “for what? for the privilege of dying with you?”

She stood beside him, radiant as a bride. Never had her eyes been brighter, her lips and cheeks more glowing.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RED MASS.

Two days after their conveyance to La Conciergerie, Puyjoli, with Sophie, and five other condemned persons, were conveyed in a tumbrel to the guillotine in the Faubourg de la Gloire, formerly Place Louis XV. Two Germans suspected of being spies, an ex-officer of the King's Guards, an old farmer-general, and an officer of the army of the Loire. This last carried his head high, and sang the Marseillaise as the tumbrel rattled noisily over the stones.

The farmer-general, an old man of eighty, wept. The Marquis de Louverchal, who had shown but small courage in the hôtel in the Rue Mirabeau, and had bewailed his fate in the prison Saint-Lazare, to Puyjoli's great relief, showed now a brave front.

Sophie stood upright in the tumbrel, leaning a hand on Gaston's shoulder to steady herself.

The crowd yelled and roared at the sight of the Marquis, the King's officer and the farmer-general.

A cold wind blew from the northeast, presaging rain. The clouds hung low and threatening.

"What a pity the boon of a ray of sunshine is not vouchsafed us on this, our last day," said Puyjoli. "Eh, Marquis? that would have made our journey a more comfortable one."

"I am so cold," murmured the other.

The Marquis was in his shirt-sleeves, his hands tied, as were those of all the others in the cart, except Sophie. His wrinkled chest was visible, blue and red with the cold, under his jabot of lace. His teeth chattered involuntarily.

"The devil," thought Puyjoli, "my father-in-law will cut a sorry enough figure in Citizen Sanson's eyes."

Suddenly from the crowd around a voice fell on their ears, causing the blood to fly to Puyjoli's face as though it had been struck suddenly.

"He is afraid—look how he trembles! He is afraid—the old man is afraid!"

Sophie felt a thrill run through Puyjoli's body at these words. Again the cry arose, "Drive him fast to the guillotine, the coward! Death to the poltroon!"

But this shivering came, as Puyjoli knew only too well, from cold and not from fear. In this supreme moment the old man faced death with a courage not less than his own; but he was old, and thinly clad, and the wind blew pitilessly. Puyjoli prayed with all his heart and soul that the journey might soon be over.

When the cart turned off into the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, the dwellers there, weary of the sight of tumbrels and their freight, turned aside their heads. Onward they were driven, until the Barrière Renversée was reached. Here the voices of the multitude gathered round and about the scaffold were like the breaking of heavy surf upon the shore of the sea.

The tumbrels halted. Sanson and his assistants helped the occupants to dismount. Puyjoli, as he descended, cast a glance of entreaty at the executioner, and indicated the Marquis with a slight gesture of his head.

Sanson, comprehending, threw a coarse blanket over the shoulders of the shivering old man, who, thanking him, drew it around him with a pitiful, almost childish gesture of satisfaction.

“And now,” said Puyjoli, smiling to him, “we will show these *canaille* that we know how to die, eh, Marquis?”

Sophie Clerval kept her eyes fixed on Puyjoli's face. She seemed quite unconscious of her surroundings, the howling crowd, the tall scaffold, the executioner and his assistants. They waited at the foot of the scaffold. The first to ascend was the soldier of the Rhine. He mounted with a firm step. They heard him chanting the Marseillaise. The refrain ended—the words, “Vive le Rep—” which followed, were cut short by the descending knife.

“Vive le roi!” cried the Marquis de Louverchal, putting his foot on the ladder. His glance, cold, stern, haughty, wandered over the turbulent, howling crowd. He had in dying regained the courage of his race. At the very moment that he was being bound to the plank, the Marquis caught hold of Sanson's hand and pressed it gratefully, as an expression of thanks for his kindness of a few moments before.

Just before mounting the ladder, Puyjoli turned and whispered to Sophie, “Grant me, my dear, faithful friend, one more favour—the last one. Let me go first. Do not force me to see you die.”

She nodded her fair head, smiling. He embraced and kissed her solemnly.

“Poor, poor Sophie,” he murmured in a voice full of pity. She smiled up at him radiantly,

“Happy Sophie,” she corrected him.

He sprang up the ladder and stood a moment looking down curiously at the crowd below. As he stood there, the embodiment of health and beauty, the voice of one of the women knitting near the scaffold fell upon his ears.

"Look at that one now," she said, jogging her companion's elbow, "did you ever see anyone so beautiful in all your life before?"

"Too beautiful Puyjoli," he murmured bitterly, "I knew that confounded phrase would dog me to the end of my days."

At the foot of the scaffold, Sophie stood, impatient.

"Wait for me," she exclaimed wildly, when she heard the sound of the axe falling heavily upon the neck of her lover.

She ascended the guillotine smiling, rosy, as she was used formerly to bound upon the stage.

On the evening of this day, Charles La Bussiere, about to enter his lodgings, heard the public crier calling out the list of those who had been executed. He bought one as usual, and ran his eye rapidly over the names. He grew very pale when he reached the name, "Sophie Clerval" on the list.

"Poor Sophie," he whispered hoarsely. He had thought he had destroyed her death-warrant with the others. It must, however, in some way have escaped his notice.

CHAPTER X.

THE TENTH OF THERMIDOR.

July 29, 1794.

THIS was the day on which the Convention turned on Robespierre, leader of the Terror, and declared him accused, him, before whom only a day before, they had trembled.

Barrère (Janus-faced as ever) made two separate speeches before the Convention that day. In the first one he applauded Robespierre as the deliverer of his country; in the second he denounced him as the scourge and oppressor of France. Robespierre sought aid from the Commune. He barricaded himself in the Hôtel de Ville as in a fortress, and called upon his colleagues to defend—to die with him. In vain. The Sections responded but weakly to his call. The Section over which Verdier presided turned a deaf ear to their President's appeals to them to rally round their Chief. They preferred, rather, to listen to Laroque's timid, temporizing counsels; Laroque, who had stolen Verdier's wife from him. Verdier, at the refusal of the Section to come to the rescue of Robespierre, clapping his red bonnet on his head, withdrew from the club wrathfully. On his departure, Laroque was voted President.

In the Hôtel de Ville all was confusion. Robespierre seemed to have lost his head ; he gave commands to his followers, only in the next breath to countermand them. Barras, mounted on a white charger, was galloping and caracoling outside in the square.

In the Convention, Charbot demanded that Robespierre and his "*fellow-scoundrels*" should be put to death. He was interrupted by the entrance of the gendarme, Merda, bringing the pistol with him with which Robespierre had just shot himself and broken his jaw.

By dawn of the next day Robespierre and his adherents were not only arrested, but condemned. Robespierre, bleeding from his self-inflicted wound, was carried in and laid upon a table in the Hall of the Committee of Public Safety. To some one who drew near and pulled up his hose, which had fallen down around his ankles, he muttered hoarsely,

"Thank you, *Monsieur*."

Strange to say, from that moment, the title "Citizen" fell into disuse. Hymns and pæons of thanksgiving arose in the prisons at the news of the fall and execution of Robespierre. But blood continued to flow almost as freely on the guillotine as before. Now, however, it was the friends and sympathizers of Robespierre who suffered.

On the morning of the tenth of Thermidor, Maximilian Médard, on reaching the Hôtel de Ville, found his entrance to his bureau barred by a sentinel.

"No one allowed to pass here."

Médard smiled.

"Pardon me, Citizen soldier, but I am employed here."

He drew out a card from his pocket as he spoke

and offered it to the sentinel. Some one, evidently in authority, came running up.

“Who are you?” he demanded, roughly.

“I?”

“Yes, you.”

“I am employed——”

“Here by the Commune.”

“Yes, Citizen——”

“Here—arrest him!”

Médard was stupefied with astonishment.

“But——” he stammered, “I have come here to do my work. I have an office here—where——”

“Your name?” interrupted the other roughly.

“My name?”

“Yes, your name.”

“It is there on my card,” returned Maximilian, more and more surprised at beholding himself surrounded by a squad of soldiers. The magistrate took the card.

“Oh!” he exclaimed, frowning, “your name is Maximilian.”

“Well——”

“You dare to call yourself Maximilian.”

“I had nothing to do with it. It is my name of baptism.”

“Very well,” returned the other, “when one is afflicted with a name like that, one should change it. It is the name of a tyrant.”

“What tyrant?”

“The ex-tyrant.”

“Ah,” returned Médard innocently, “I thought that the ex-tyrant’s name was Louis.”

The other answered furiously, “I will show you that you cannot bandy words with impunity with Citizen

Laroque. You were in the employ of the Commune, your name is Maximilian, you are a traitor."

"A traitor?"

"Outside of the law," returned the other. "Arrest him."

Accompanied by La Bussière, Clotilde went, after the execution of Robespierre, to the Commune, to ask for the release of her husband at the hands of the President, Legendre.

"Thorel is a good patriot," returned the former butcher, as he signed an order for the release. "His place is here in the Convention."

"There is also," murmured La Bussière, obsequiously, "a poor devil of a prompter, confined in Saint-Pelagie—Citizen Pluche."

Legendre, who seemed in high spirits, signed an order for Pluche's release also.

"We have avenged Danton," he said, as he handed the warrants to La Bussière.

"Avenged him on whom?" thought La Bussière to himself, as he received them bowing.

That evening in the humble dwelling of Nicholas Pluche, a feast was spread, at which Babet, rosy with joy, presided.

The Girondin and his wife were already there. The whole family was awaiting the arrival of Médard, when La Bussière, pale and breathless, carrying Verdier's child in his arms, burst in upon them.

"I bring you—an orphan," he exclaimed sadly, placing the little one in Clotilde's outstretched arms. "I have just seen Verdier's head fall by the guillotine. He died as a Spartan—a hero, crying with his last breath, 'Vive la République!'"

A silence fell on all. The room which Babet had made gay and bright with flowers seemed suddenly to grow dark and cold as an underground tomb.

The child had clasped his arms tightly around Clotilde's neck, who held him to her, weeping.

"Sit down, Citizen," said Babet, after a silence of several moments, "and dine with us."

"Thank you, I am not hungry. The sight of so much blood has choked me. I have still another piece of bad tidings to communicate. Your friend Médard——"

"What of him?"

"He—is dead."

"Dead!"

"Dead—on the guillotine. Condemned to death—because his name was—*Maximilian*."

"Great God!" exclaimed Pluche, "Médard, the kindest, the most guileless creature in the whole world!"

"As for me," continued La Bussière, "from this moment forth, I wash my hands of politics. The poor player takes up again his old rôle."

* * * * *

A few days after his visit to Pluche, La Bussière found himself in the cemetery of Picpus. The cemetery where the last victims of the Terror had been hastily interred.

He carried in one hand a great bunch of roses, which he had brought with him to strew on Sophie's grave, if he should be fortunate enough to find it among so many other unmarked and nameless graves.

He was accompanied by one of the officials in charge of the cemetery. The man, after a scrutinizing exami-

nation of the freshly-dug graves lying thick at his feet, pointed downward with his finger, saying briefly :

“ There.”

“ Here ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ Thank you, and slipping a coin into the man’s hand, La Bussière motioned him to withdraw.

On a grave next to the one pointed out to him, a woman in heavy mourning garments knelt, absorbed in prayer. Her black veil, thrown back, revealed a pale, pretty, piquant face. Becoming aware, presently, that a stranger was standing near her, she got up off her knees and was about to pass him quickly by. La Bussière, however, knowing that Puyjoli, the Marquis de Louverchal and Sophie had been executed together and buried afterward in one spot, accosted her.

“ Pardon me, but do not I see before me Mademoiselle de Louverchal ? ”

The woman, throwing back her small head, answered with a proud, lofty look,

“ I am the wife, the widow, of the Vicomte de Puyjoli,” and, bowing slightly, she passed him with a quick, light step. Left alone, La Bussière strewed Sophie’s grave with the flowers he had brought with him.

Was it possible she was dead ; hidden under a few inches of mould, this woman so young, so beautiful, so full of mirth and the pride of life ! Again he saw her sweet, winsome face, heard again her fresh, bright voice, her silvery, ringing laugh.

With a lingering step and eyes full of tears, he turned away at last from this flower-strewn grave, over which small yellow butterflies were gaily fluttering.

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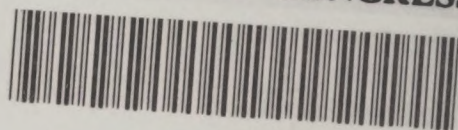
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